



SOUTH MUST TAKE MORE REFUGEES

Report by Peter Madeley

WEALTHY southern areas of the country should take their fair share of Syrian refugees, says Dudley North MP Ian Austin.

The Labour MP said that asylum seekers were overwhelmingly concentrated in poorer communities in the North and the Midlands, while many richer areas in the South had taken 'virtually none'.

He said this was putting a strain on public services including schools and hospitals, and called for a fairer distribution of asylum seekers across the UK.

Mr Austin was speaking in a Parliamentary debate on the resettlement of refugees following the Government's commitment to house another 20,000 from Syria.

Dudley supports nearly half as many asylum seekers as the entire South East, he said, while wealthy communities represented by the Prime Minister and nine other cabinet ministers had not taken in a single asylum seeker.

Mr Austin also said there were 380 asylum seekers in all of the areas represented by the cabinet - fewer than in either Wolverhampton or Sandwell. He highlighted official figures showing that the Black Country councils had taken in almost as many asylum seekers as the South West, South East and East put together.

Support

He said: "People in Dudley have always played their part in welcoming people fleeing persecution abroad, but it's about time people elsewhere did the same."

"The Government must find a fairer way of dispersing people around the country to ease pressure on public services like housing, schools and the NHS in communities like ours."

Last year an investigation by The Chronicle's sister newspaper the Express & Star revealed that one-in-three asylum seekers were sent to the West Midlands. Asylum seekers receive £36 a week, known as Section 95 support, while their application for refugee status is assessed.

Dudley had 226 asylum seekers supported under Section 95, while Sandwell had 695, Wolverhampton 645 and Walsall 234. A total of 1,800 were housed in the Black Country. In the South and East there were 1,843.

Mr Austin wants to see EU structural funds used in areas such as the Black Country that face the biggest pressures on public services.

COLLEGE BOSS OFFERS TO MEET PROTESTERS



Campaigner Richard Deakin with protesters concerned over King Edward VI College's road proposal at a recreation site

A COLLEGE principal says she is willing to hold talks with campaigners protesting over plans to build a new access road through playing fields.

Dozens of objections have been lodged against plans by King Edward VI College, Stourbridge, to alter access to The Green Fields, off Love Lane, Oldswinford.

People living near the fields, which are used by sports clubs, fear the new road could cause congestion and parking problems if given the green light.

Campaigners have formed an action group

and held a protest over the proposal. Action group member Richard Deakin, aged 72, said he had delivered letters to the college in a bid to highlight concern. He said: "We want the college to sit down and have a meeting with us."

College principal Remley Mann said officials had made efforts to reach campaigners and were happy to hold a round of talks with residents.

Miss Mann said: "Whilst we have received messages of support for these proposals from many of our neighbours, we are also aware

of the concerns raised by other residents. We continue to meet with the representatives of this group with a view to addressing these concerns."

"The Foundation Trustees of King Edward VI College, who are the freeholders of The Green Fields, extended an invitation to residents in their letter dated January 11 to meet with Jeff Caseley, college site manager, to listen to their concerns and to keep them informed of the progress of the planning application. To date neither Mr Caseley nor I have received a request to meet with residents."

SUPERMARKET

Aldi create 80 jobs with new Lye store

SUPERMARKET chain Aldi have been given permission by Dudley Council to build a store on a derelict site in Stourbridge. The scheme on the site of the Bronx works, off the Dudley Road in Lye, will create 80 jobs.

The development will see 120 car parking spaces provided after council planners received over more than 100 letters of support for the store from residents. At a meeting on Monday, Councillor David Vickers described the store as a 'great facility for Lye' and Councillor Keiran Casey said the site needed to be refurbished.

FIRE

Suspected arson as blaze damages flat

A FLAT in Stourbridge was damaged by fire in a suspected arson attack.

Fire crews were called to the blaze at Stepping Stones on Monday night.

No-one was injured but the fire caused damage to the unoccupied flat.

West Midlands Fire Service believe the blaze was started deliberately and West Midlands Police are treating the fire as suspicious.

Spokesman Matthew Smith said: "One fire engine from Brierley Hill and one from Stourbridge attended."

THREATS

Hoax callers strike again at six schools

SIX schools in the Black Country and Birmingham have received more hoax bomb threats - causing disruption for the third week in a row.

Police said the 'false and malicious' calls were received on Monday after 8am. Lessons were resumed by 10am.

Oldbury and Bristnall Hall academies were threatened for the fourth time, and Shireland Collegiate Academy and Perryfields High for the second time. Hall Green Secondary School and Edgbaston Girls High School faced threats for the first time.

Last week two 14-year-olds were arrested regarding earlier hoax calls.

INSIDE

CUBS ENJOY BIRTHDAY BASH



PAGE 6

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| | |
|--------------------------|--------------------|
| CONTENTS | |
| MARK ANDREWS | 6 |
| LETTERS | 7 |
| COMPETITION | 8 |
| THE FAST TICKET | 21 |
| PROPERTY | 29 |
| MOTORING | 32 |
| LOCAL SPECIALISTS | 34 & 35 |
| SPORT | 39 & 40 |
| CONTACT US | |

EDITORIAL:
Tel: 01384 353201/01384 353205
E-mail: dudley.chrons@expressandstar.co.uk

SPORTS:
Tel: 01902 319453
E-mail: chron.sport@expressandstar.co.uk

PHOTOGRAPHIC:
Tel: John Sambrooks 01902 319431

ADVERTISING: Sue Jones
Tel: 01384 399901
E-mail: sue.jones@expressandstar.co.uk

PROPERTY: Marguerita Finnegan
Tel: 01902 319627
E-mail: marguerita.finnegan@expressandstar.co.uk

MOTORING: Liz Barratt
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White Dee's bags of help for charity



Dee Kelly helps pack for shopper Francesca Fudge

A SUPPORT group hosted a celebrity bag packing event at a supermarket in Stourbridge to raise funds for victims of abusive relationships.

Dee Kelly, known as White Dee, from the series Benefits Street backed the group SODA (Survivors of Domestic Abuse) at their fundraising event at Tesco.

Fundraisers spent two hours packing shoppers' bags and collecting money on Friday, which will go to supporting victims.

The TV reality star first got on board with group after speaking to founder Sam Billingham on Twitter, after he had asked Dee for support.

Dee was won over by the courage shown by Sam, who was a victim of domestic abuse, and offered a helping hand with the fundraising.

At the event, Dee said: "It is an honour that somebody would want me to help them with something they are so passionate about. She is an in-

spirational woman. I am now a patron of the group."

Sam Billingham, who set up SODA in 2009, said: "I wanted to help people in that situation and didn't feel there was being offered to put, and so I set up a support group."

"It is amazing really to have Dee Kelly on board. I know she is really busy but for her to take time out to help me is brilliant."

To find out more about the group visit www.sodahq.org

Driving instructor is guilty of sex attacks

A DRIVING instructor was facing a substantial prison sentence after being found guilty of sexually assaulting his pupils.

Gary Rolinson, who ran the 500+ Driving School in Kingswinford, preyed on teenagers, interfering with them during driving lessons, Wolverhampton Crown Court heard.

A jury last week took seven hours and 24 minutes to convict the 60-year-old of 13 offences of sexual assault and one of causing a person to engage in sexual activity, following a 14-day trial. The crimes, committed between 2012 and 2014, involved six 17-year-old and 18-year-olds. Rolinson was acquitted of a further alleged sexual assault on another 17-year-old.

He was remanded on bail for reports to be prepared until a date to be fixed.

Judge Andrew Lockhart QC said: "You have been convicted on overwhelming evidence of a campaign of assaults on young men. It is certain that you will be sent into custody."

After the verdict, the judge told the jury: "Don't worry about your children going to a driving instructor. This kind of case is very rare."

Touched

Rolinson inappropriately touched his victims after they made a mistake while driving, the court was told. He denied all the charges.

Rolinson, of Andover Crescent, Kingswinford, launched the 500+ Driving School in 2008 after being made redundant from Rover. He was arrested by Staffordshire Police in 2012 after a teenager complained about Rolinson's behaviour during a driving lesson but officers decided to take no further action after inquiries failed to find any corroborating evidence.

Two years later West Midlands Police received a complaint from another youth and, after discovering it was the second of its kind, wrote to the 750 men and women of all ages that Rolinson had taught to drive over three years. As a result more youths came forward who were prepared to go in the witness box.

Detective Constable Fiona Hatfield said: "I would like to commend all the young men on being so brave in coming forward and giving evidence."

Singer strums up support for gig



Musician and Stourbridge vintage record and guitar shop owner Pete Boddis will be performing a fundraising gig

A MUSICIAN and vintage record shop owner will be headlining a gig in aid of charity.

Pete Boddis, who runs a guitar and record shop in Stourbridge, will be raising the money by performing his own material at the Robin 2, in Bilston, on March 20 at 8pm.

The night will be in aid of Breast Cancer Now with the Pete Boddis Band and the Freewheelin' Band.

Mr Boddis, aged 71, said: "Music is my passion and we'll be joining

together to sing a few songs and raise some money for charity. I've done other gigs at the Robin 2 before and it's a nice venue. We felt that we wanted to do something as a band for a good cause and this seemed the perfect way."

The Pete Boddis Band is a six-piece group comprising Pete on vocals and guitars, singer Marilyn Bos, Pete Arrowsmith on lead guitar, Ken Moore on sax and harmonica, Robin Johnson on bass guitar and drummer Kevin Bettingham.

They were formed to play Mr Boddis' original songs written over the past 30 years.

Mr Boddis is also a collector of vintage stringed instruments and his collection includes a 1960s bass that belonged to The Who's John Entwistle.

Tickets are £5 available to buy at the Mount Pleasant venue – call 01902 401211 or see www.therobin.co.uk – or Mr Boddis' shop above Stourbridge Music Centre in Lower High Street.

An ambitious expansion is proposed at Hindu temple

A HINDU temple in the Black Country, that is already the largest in Europe, has revealed a major expansion plan.

Ambitious proposals for the 21-acre Balaji Temple complex in Tividale have been submitted. Sandwell Council to construct a new building for processions and festivals.

These set out a scheme to construct a 15-metre-tall building, which would house a festival chariot, and to build a processional route around the site off Dudley Road East.

Temple trustee Dr Venkataramana Rao said the scheme would ensure the temple was better equipped to host some of the key Hindu festivals.

He said: "At the moment we can't keep the chariot anywhere outside because it's made of wood – that's why we need this new building."

"All the temples in India and also those in London have chariots and places to keep them. It is an important part of the worship of Hindu gods, that's why we have a chariot."

"At the moment the route around the temple won't hold the weight of the chariot. The chariots are normally pulled by 20 or 30 devotees."

The application states: "To accommodate a large chariot, the internal floor area is 30 sq m and height of the building reaches 14.9m. Eleven metre tall roller shutters have been incorporated into the design for easy movement of the chariot in and out of the building."

Council planners will rule on the application in due course.

History comes to life in talks

A SERIES of talks are being held in local libraries.

The Building Stones of the Dudley Area is the subject of an hour-long talk by Keith Hodgkins at Halesowen Library on Wednesday, February 10, from 2.30pm. Two Blokes, Two Chairs an' a Chap Called John is the title for a talk at Dudley Library on February 23 features stories, songs and discussion about life in the Black Country with Billy Bren Hawthorne and John Langford, from 3.15pm.

The last February talk, The First World War and Stourbridge, by Kenneth Wright, is at Stourbridge Library on February 26 at 2.30pm.

Tickets to each of the talks cost £3. For further information contact Dudley Libraries on (01384) 815560.

Fast-track course for new lecturers

HALESOWEN College has launched a teacher-training course to help potential lecturers change careers quickly. Students can now complete a Diploma in Education and Training course in one year instead of two at the college, partnered by the University of Worcester.

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Zoo needs guides to talk about the Tectons

GUIDES are being recruited to help give visitors an insight into the history of Dudley Zoo's famous Tecton buildings.

The 12 concrete structures, which range from the iconic wave entrance to the historic bear ravine, date back to when the zoo first opened to the public in 1937.

Some of the Tectons are enclosures for animals while others had a more practical purpose such as the kiosks used to sell ice creams and sweets in times gone by.

The zoo is now appealing for people interested in becoming voluntary tour guides.

Since completion of a major £1.15 million project, which saw four of the Tectons restored to their former glory, the attraction says it has been inundated with requests for tours.

Modernist

Construction supervisor Carlo Diponio said: "We're looking for 20 guides who can be called upon to provide interesting and informative presentations for visitors about our unique Modernist structures at occasional events throughout the year."

"Following the recent Heritage Lottery funded restoration project on four Tecton buildings, there has been a rise in interest from groups wanting to learn more about these iconic buildings. This is an exciting opportunity for anyone who has a passion for architecture."

The Tecton buildings also include the Queen Mary restaurant.

£36k library wi-fi upgrade starts

A £36,300 scheme is under way to upgrade free wi-fi services in Dudley libraries.

The project has been paid for after Dudley Council made a successful bid to Arts Council England.

Wi-fi in all Dudley libraries, library links, archives, Himley and Priory Halls will be upgraded to the council's free DudleyConnect service on February 15.

This will give the public easy access to the internet using their own devices.

Councillor Rachel Harris said "We've been offering free wi-fi at libraries since 2011, but this upgrade makes registering and using wi-fi simpler and allows users to access this facility in a range of council buildings."

Repair centre is creating 12 jobs

A DOZEN jobs are being created in Kingswinford at a new accident repair centre. The centre, at Second Avenue on the Pensnett Trading Estate, represents a £250,000 investment by BodyKraft, based on the same estate.

Weekly market proposed for town centre



A past market in Stourbridge town centre

STOURBRIDGE'S High Street could close to traffic on Thursdays under plans to create a weekly outdoor market day in the town centre.

High Street and part of Market Street would shut every Thursday under the proposals by market operator LSD Promotions.

Traders have previously resisted plans to have a market close the High Street over fears it could affect business for shops. But LSD Promotions says it is aiming to transform the town centre and make it a bustling market place one day a week.

Officials said road closures would be necessary to allow visitors to explore the market.

Businesses in the town centre will now be consulted to see if they are in favour of the plans.

The first market could be held as soon as April, with LSD Promotions keen to run them until December and then, depending on their success, decide whether they should become a permanent fixture.

Spokesman Dermot McGillcuddy said: "Using modern, high-class pop-up canopies and equipment, the

stalls would be positioned in front of the Ryemarket shopping centre, by the fountain, in High Street and Market Street. This would require the street to be closed to traffic on market day creating an atmospheric shopping environment and space for shoppers to circulate safely.

"Thursday was traditionally half-day closing in Stourbridge and considered by many businesses to be the quietest trading day, but we believe, and are confident, that we can create a vibrant and highly successful market."

Euro MP is taking pubs battle to Westminster

WEST Midlands MEP Bill Etheridge will head to Westminster in his campaign to protect pubs.

UKIP Euro MP and Dudley councillor Mr Etheridge has requested a meeting with the pubs minister, Marcus Jones MP, to seek assurances from the Government that more will be done to protect profitable pubs from being taken over.

Campaign for Real Ale member Mr Etheridge, who is also a Sedgley councillor, has supported community groups such as those who have managed to save the Seven Stars in Gospel End Road, Sedgley, and the Hare and Hounds in Wollaston.

He said: "The West Midlands has been hit hard by recent deals which have thrown doubts over the future of 360 pubs.

"Legislation to protect against this has proved woefully inadequate and I want to know what this Government plan to do about it."

"Profitable pubs like the Hare and Hounds and the Seven Stars should not be in the position they are in now.

"Once again, we have seen greedy corporations steering Government policy and it has to stop before the whole industry is destroyed."

Joining him in his campaign will be Martin Day, UKIP's regional 'save the pub' spokesman.

Licensee

Former licensee Mr Day said: "Since 1989 the UK licensed trade has been the victim of some shockingly bad legislation.

"Our aim is to start reversing the damage and reaffirm the status of the pub at the heart of our communities."

In November Mr Etheridge held talks with bosses of Punch Taverns as part of his effort to protect profitable pubs from redevelopment. Mr Etheridge met chief executive Duncan Garrod and PR director Andy Slee.

New River Retail has acquired 370 pubs from both Punch Taverns and Marstons, with many of those threatened with conversion, closure or the loss of car parking facilities.

Pubs targeted for supermarkets in recent months have included The Maypole in Halesowen, the Haden Cross in Cradley Heath and the Seven Stars.

Mr Etheridge has previously called the closure of pubs 'a depressing trend'.

Anniversary for cancer help group



Founder Denise Hudson (left), of Stourton, Steve Waltho and Jayne Waltho, with Elaine Crowder, of Norton

A CANCER support group is celebrating its tenth anniversary and several successful fundraising events.

The Rainbow Breast Reconstruction group was formed by Denise Hudson and Debbie Barnett who met at a checkout at Sainsbury's in Amblecote and found they were both recovering from breast cancer.

Over the years the group has helped ladies undergoing breast

reconstruction following cancer, as well as raising up to £60,000 for The White House cancer charity and Russell's Hall Hospital cancer unit in Dudley.

Mayor and mayoress of Dudley, Councillor Steve Waltho and his wife Jayne, were present for the celebration last week along with Elaine Crowder from Sainsbury's.

Mrs Hudson, who officially started the charity in January 2006, said belonging to the group

had allowed her to meet inspiring people. She added: "I would like to say thank you to everyone who has helped us over the past 10 years. I feel privileged to have met some lovely people who have inspired me. It is about living through cancer and doing something positive and everyone has come together as a community."

The group gets together every third Thursday at The White House in Ednam Road, Dudley.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Hippodrome plan will be scrutinised

AN independent assessor has been appointed to scrutinise plans submitted by a team trying to save Dudley Hippodrome from demolition.

The package from a new steering group working with the Friends of Dudley Hippodrome is being scrutinised with a final decision expected in the coming weeks.

Dudley Council has already approved controversial plans to demolish the Hippodrome to create an 'open public space' but officials allowed campaigners another attempt to prepare a realistic plan for taking it over.

UKIP wants more female support

UKIP representative for Upper Gornal and Woodsetton, Karen Jones, has been unanimously elected to take the helm as chairman of the UKIP Dudley and Halesowen branch.

Mrs Jones said she was ready for the challenges ahead. "The local elections are just around the corner and UKIP is already on the march as we fight to bolster our numbers on Dudley Council."

She added: "As the branch's first female chairman, I hope to encourage more women to stand up for Dudley by joining us."

Never too late to learn how to cook

A FREE six-week course on getting started in cookery is being held at the Beacon Centre for the Blind in Sedgley.

The course, which is being run by Age Concern Dudley, starts on March 1.

For more information on how to sign up e-mail mmanville@beaconvision.org

It is open to those living in Dudley over the age of 55. Classes will run between 10.30am and 12.30pm.

Homes given green light at derelict pub

A DERELICT pub will be turned into seven new homes, after plans were given the green light.

Council planners have given the go-ahead to the proposals for the Golden Cross pub in Netherton, a vandalised property at the corner of Cradley Road and Saltwells Road.

The permission from Dudley Council for new homes ends the hopes of Primrose Hill Congregational Church to turn the building into a community centre.

Industry at archives

A NEW exhibition about business and industry in the Dudley area is being staged at Dudley Archives and Local History Centre.

The Making Brass history exhibit will run through to March at the centre next to the Black County Living Museum in Tipton Road.

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THE BEST OF PETER RHODES



THE Bishop of London suggests that bearded vicars may find it easier to "reach out" to Muslims. The snag, of course, is that a majority of new priests in the Anglican Church are female. A burka, perhaps?

THE Mad World of Donald Trump (C4) seemed to start with a prejudiced title. But the more you watched Matt Frei's hour-long documentary, the more the word "mad" seemed appropriate. Donald Trump is triumphing because America is scared and wants a new messiah. It's scared of migration, scared of terrorists, scared of things that are foreign, alien or not understood. The irony is that the perceived solution – electing President Donald J Trump – is scarier than anything else.

BUT let's not be too sniffy and superior. How many Paris-scale massacres would it take in London, Birmingham or Manchester before Trumpery arose in England?

THOSE of us who once owned a racoon-skin hat may have lived to see the beginning and the end of the TV revolution. It began in the 1950s when we kids suddenly discovered that no game of cowboys and Indians in a freezing street was half as good as the Cisco Kid on a nine-inch Pye in a warm lounge. The TV revolution entered its demise this week with the report that internet-savvy kids are no longer watching much telly. The TV companies, while putting a brave face on it, must be absolutely terrified.

EMMA Reynolds, Wolverhampton MP and former shadow minister, is, like many MPs, too young to remember life outside the EU (or Common Market as we were told to call it). When she says "leaving the EU would be "the worst of all worlds," she is addressing an ageing electorate, many of whom recall Britain before the 1975 referendum, and remember it rather fondly.

I WONDER if Worcester feels any sense of communal shame over the rush by hordes of locals chasing the £33 million Lotto jackpot. Okay, one or two may genuinely believe they have the winning ticket. But Camelot report hundreds of claimants, suggesting attempted fraud on a massive scale. Oxford is the city of dreaming spires. Is Worcester the city of scheming liars?

A READER shares a gem of a platform announcement at Birmingham New Street. It works best in a Brummie accent: "Platform Six for the 16:33 to Northampton, calling at Marston Green (slight pause) and lots of other places."

ADVERTISING staff go into a school and ask children how clean they feel after wiping their bottoms on toilet tissue. Aren't Andrex TV ads weird?

Don't miss Peter Rhodes every Monday to Friday in your Express & Star

Disruption ahead for motorists

MOTORISTS in Stourbridge face disruption after plans for two major roadworks schemes on busy routes around the town were announced.

Drivers have been told to expect delays next month.

Resurfacing work will start in Birmingham Street, near Stourbridge tip, from February Monday. Works will stretch from the ring road to Stamford Road and drivers are told

to expect diversions, temporary lane closures and stop-and-go signs.

Initial work will be carried out at night with a road closure in place until February 14 as officials try to minimise disruption.

Diversion

A signed diversion route via A491 Hagley Road, B4186 Glasshouse Hill and Grange Road and A4036 Grange

Lane and Pedmore Road will be in place.

Work on the opposite side of the road, heading towards the ring road, will take place between 9.30am and 3.30pm using stop-and-go signs or temporary lane closures.

Meanwhile, a separate resurfacing project will be under way at the same time in Amblecote. Work on St Johns Road, between Amblecote High

Street and Hagley Road, will be from 7pm until 3am using lane closures.

Councillor Hilary Bills said: "We always work hard to keep disruption to a minimum whenever undertaking highway improvements but on such a key route some disruption is unfortunately inevitable. Work has been scheduled to avoid peak traffic times and we hope to complete the project as soon as possible."

It's best for patients if clinic closes – GP

By Marion Brennan

A GP from a surgery due to shut has backed the decision of health chiefs, saying it will improve the service for patients.

Wordsley Green Medical Practice runs its main health centre in The Green, Wordsley, but will close its branch surgery in Market Street, Kingswinford, on March 14.

More than 30 objections from patients about the closure – citing reasons of transport, logistics and staffing – have been made. But practice partner, Doctor Randheer Mochikkal said that many patients understood why it was being done.

"Ultimately we want to improve the quality of service for all," he said. "This means there will be more reception staff to answer phones and more consultation rooms at Wordsley Green.

"There will be a bigger team of staff to bring it all together in the best possible way. We want to make the impact as minimal as possible and an equal service for all."

Concerned

He added: "The key comments and feelings from patients were that overall they were understanding.

"We did have some concerned about transport to Wordsley Green and the lack of personal service at a larger site, but we want to reassure them that the staff at Market Street will all be moved to Wordsley Green too, so that familiarity will still be there."

Overall 9,789 patients are served by the two branches, with around 1,350 of those using Market Street.

The decision for closure, which was made at a Dudley Clinical Commissioning Group meeting, came as bosses stated the branch was "no longer fit for purpose" and running at a substantial loss.

Steve Wellings, primary commissioning group chairman, said: "No one likes to close GP surgeries but there is a financial threat to this practice as a whole."

Letters will be sent to all patients.

Muck no obstacle for intrepid duo



Co-workers Charlotte Needham, from Kinver, and Neil Scott, of Tipton, are hoping to raise £500 for Myeloma UK

TWO adventurous employees Auto Styling Truckman in Brierley Hill are preparing to tackle a gruelling 10km obstacle course to raise money for a cancer charity.

Charlotte Needham, an account manager from Kinver and Neil Scott, field sales manager from Tipton, are hoping to raise £500 for Myeloma UK.

They have already undertaken a punishing training schedule to ensure they achieve their goal.

The Mud Yard course, taking place on March 19 at Drayton Manor theme park, will put the pair's fitness levels to the test, with water crossings, muddy fields and a dense woodland area standing between them and the finish line.

Auto Styling Truckman, the UK's leading 4x4 vehicle

accessory manufacturer and distributor, is a long-term supporter of Myeloma UK, and has previously sponsored its charity ball, helping to raise more than £28,000.

Myeloma UK is the only organisation in the UK dealing exclusively with myeloma.

It provides information and support to patients and their families and helps myeloma patients live longer with a better quality of life.

Charlotte said: "It is a challenging course but Neil and I determined to get to the finishing line and raise as much money possible for Myeloma."

To support Charlotte and Neil's fundraising, go to www.justgiving.com/Autostylingtruckman or for more information on myeloma go to www.myeloma.org.uk

£25k fund to set-up a scheme for traders

AROUND £25,000 of funding has been secured for a project aiming to boost investment in Halesowen.

Campaigners are hoping to set up a Business Improvement District to fund a range of projects in the town centre.

Public events, clean-up programmes and improved marketing are among projects which could be funded through the scheme.

The BID scheme will see firms join forces to create a single company, with each member paying a levy. Members will then get to decide how the money is spent.

It is estimated that a BID company in Halesowen could generate £51,668 with a one per cent levy and £103,337 if it is set at two per cent.

Halesowen BID manager Barry Wheeler said he was delighted the group had secured the start-up funding through Dudley Council.

"We are happy to have this money now to allow us to move forward," he said.

This cash allows business plans to be drawn up and a glossy brochure is being created to help market the scheme.

Mr Wheeler said he would be holding meetings with traders this month to encourage signing up with BID.

A majority of members are needed to vote in favour of setting up the scheme when a poll is taken in late spring.

A similar scheme is being worked on for Stourbridge.

Registration is launched for runs

THIS year's Black Country Run will take place in Halesowen on Sunday, July 3.

Registration has already opened on the event's website at www.theblackcountryrun.com and this year there will be a 5k family fun run alongside the 10k event.

Last year more than 1,100 runners took part in the 10k event organised by Halesowen and Rowley Regis Rotary Club.

Those taking part in the main event and the family fun run will help to raise lots of money for various charities and good causes. The 2015 run raised £23,000 and the total amount now raised for charity since the inaugural event in 2012 is £77,000.

The 10k race will start at 9am and the fun run at 11.30am.

Beach Boy brings his Pet Sounds to Brum

BEACH Boys legend Brian Wilson is to play in Birmingham on what marks the 50th anniversary of one of his band's most famous albums. The Pet Sounds anniversary tour visits Symphony Hall on March 18 with his bandmates Al Jardine and Blondie Chaplin.

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Club aiming to draw in extra players after revamp

A FOOTBALL club is planning to build new state-of-the-art facilities to try to attract the next generation of players.

West Hagley Football Club has launched a bid for funding which would allow it to build new changing rooms. Planning permission has already been granted for the new facility and it is hoped work could start within months.

But the club is relying on around £180,000 in funding which it hopes can be delivered by the Football Foundation and other organisations.

The current facilities on Hagley Playing Fields are 50 years old. The old building would be demolished and the new facility, which would include two changing rooms, disabled toilets, showers, a cafe and kitchen area, storage room, referee's room and a club area, would go up in its place.

West Hagley runs football clubs for various age groups, meaning hundreds of youngsters would benefit from the upgrade.

Hagley councillor Steve Colella said the run-down building needed updating. "It's a 1960s building and its not very nice at all.

"We have near enough 400 members and the majority of those train on Saturday mornings so we want to keep the numbers we have but want more development. We also want to increase the number of girls at the club."

Bosses hope the new facilities will be completed for the start of the 2016/17 season.

Call to deal with poor car parking

A STOURBRIDGE councillor has called for a crackdown on vehicles illegally parking on zigzag lines.

Cars and vans have been parking on the lines in Bridgnorth Road and Wollaston Road in Wollaston village causing traffic blockages.

Now Councillor Nicolas Barlow, who represents the Wollaston and Stourbridge town ward, has said that drivers should be targeted for their inconsiderate parking.

He said: "It is not acceptable and I think a polite letter should be sent to whoever does it to inform them that it is wrong.

"The zigzags are there for a reason and careless drivers should be aware of this."

New group focus on family history

A GROUP researching family history is being launched. The first meeting is on March 7, from 10.30am to 12.30pm at Dudley Archives and Local History Centre, Tipton Road. Book on (01384) 818310 or (01384) 812770.

We must learn lessons from Holocaust



Survivor Susan Pollack at Dudley College

DUDLEY'S annual Holocaust memorial event listened to an address by 85-year-old survivor Susan Pollack.

Hungarian Jew Mrs Pollack said her time in Auschwitz-Birkenau and marching to Bergen-Belsen had totally dehumanised her. "I was a robot, I had no emotions," she said.

Mrs Pollack and her family were ordered to leave their home in April 1944. She, her brother and their mother were sent to a ghetto, then an internment camp. In May 1944, they were taken by rail cattle truck to Auschwitz-Birkenau. Her mother

was sent directly to the gas chambers, while the 13-year-old survived by lying about her age – stating she was 15.

She remained in the camp for around 10 weeks before being sent to Germany to work as a slave labourer in an armaments factory. With the Allies advancing, the prisoners were forced on a death march to Bergen-Belsen.

On April 15, 1945, Mrs Pollack was liberated by the British Army. She said the 'gentle' nature of the British soldier who picked her off the floor in

Belsen reminded her of the good side of humanity.

Mrs Pollack said it was important people continue to remember what happened during the Holocaust to ensure it cannot happen again. She said: "We can't change the past but we can learn lessons from the persecution and killing that took place in Europe. People need to make a strong commitment that we won't allow it to take place again."

Dudley North MP Ian Austin said Mrs Pollack's presence was 'humbling and inspirational'.

School claims figures don't give full picture

A BLACK Country school says that official figures ranking it as bottom of Dudley's secondary school league tables don't give a true picture of its performance.

Statistics released by the Department for Education (DfE) last month placed Elmfield Rudolf Steiner School as bottom of Dudley's school league tables for GCSE results.

But school leaders say the figures have been distorted due to pupils studying an alternative curriculum that staggers the times when they take exams.

They say that last year 77 per cent of final year pupils at Elmfield achieved five or more GCSEs at A*-C, including English and maths. School spokesman Chris Field said: "At Elmfield Rudolf Steiner School students study the Steiner Waldorf Curriculum, rather than the National Curriculum.

"This curriculum contains all the subjects you would expect such as maths, English, science and languages. From Year 10 students study for their GCSEs, whilst continuing to study the Steiner Waldorf Curriculum until Year 12.

Majority

"As a result of this they stagger their exams, taking up to four GCSEs in Year 11 and a further four in Year 12.

"Our pupils' GCSE results are consistently above the national average with the vast majority of students going onto sixth form college and university.

"However, the DfE, when reporting GCSE results across the country, do not look at our GCSEs taken in Year 12.

"Our pupils have only taken four GCSEs at the end of Year 11 so even if they have got four A*s they will appear to have failed by the DfE's measure of five GCSEs.

"It is only by looking at the results of our Year 12 final year students that you get the full picture.

Last year dozens of secondary schools – including St Peter's Collegiate CofE School in Wolverhampton – saw their results plummet to zero because some combinations of English GCSEs and international GCSEs did not count towards results.

Gardeners' blooming great effort



Staff at Ashwood Nurseries celebrate breaking their fundraising target for Macmillan Cancer Support

KEEN gardeners have collected a blooming marvellous amount of money for a cancer charity.

Ashwood Nurseries, near Kingswinford, collected more than £21,000 for Macmillan Cancer Support over a year.

The plant nursery and garden centre held six charity open days, welcoming 3,283 visitors.

Nursery owner John Massey was thanked by Macmillan's Dudley committee for raising £21,810,

which had smashed the garden centre's target of £15,000.

Nursery manager Tony Cartwright said: "Our main fundraising came from John's Garden Open Days and Hellebore Tours, where the entire proceeds from entrance charges are donated.

"There were many other projects and activities held throughout the year including a Macmillan coffee morning in our tea and staff room."

He added: "The money Ashwood has raised will be used locally."

Money raised by Ashwood will also support the Specialist Care at Home partnership, which is run by Mary Stevens Hospice, NHS Dudley Foundation Trust and other organisations.

The next John's Garden Charity Open Day is on Saturday, in aid of Wombourne High Flyers for adults with learning difficulties.

NEWS IN BRIEF

School site in line to have housing

A FORMER primary school in Pensnett is to be knocked down to make way for new homes.

The Education Centre in Church Street has been empty for some years and is deemed surplus to requirements by Dudley Council.

A total of 14 new homes would be built on the site under the plans, with the development split into detached and semi-detached properties.

Pensnett councillor John Martin said: "It has been derelict for a long time and a derelict building is always an eyesore."

Roadworks alert over gas project

MOTORISTS face disruption as roadworks that could last up to five weeks got under way in Rowley Regis.

Church Road, from Rowley Village to Longmeadow, and Park Avenue have been closed for work to replace a gas mains.

The work, which began last week, will see traffic from Church Road diverted via Hawes Lane, Tipton Green, Portway Road and Hanover Road. Park Avenue diversions will be made through Church Road and Newhall Road. The work by Balfour Beatty is expected to finish on February 19.

Tory candidate for commissioner

A FORMER leader of Dudley Council has been picked by the Conservative Party as their candidate for West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner.

Les Jones, aged 60, previously stood as the Conservative Police and Crime Commissioner candidate at the 2014 by-election.

Mr Jones represents Pedmore and Stourbridge East on Dudley Council. He was chairman of finance at the old West Midlands Police Authority.

Hospice charity for children praised by MP

AN MP has hailed the importance of a Black Country children's charity following a visit to their new facilities.

Mike Wood, MP for Dudley South, received a guided tour of Acorns in Walsall. They provide care for life-limited children and young people, and support for their families.

Mr Wood was shown around the new parent accommodation facility. He said: "It's very uplifting to see how tirelessly Acorns work for children and young people."

Arena wins venue title

THE Barclaycard Arena in Birmingham won the Best Arts or Entertainment Venue category in the city's 2016 Wonders of Westside Awards.

The winners were revealed during the awards night, just a short distance from the arena at the International Convention Centre.

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Cloudy2Clear Windows – Service With A Smile!

It's been a crazy few months for Cloudy2Clear Windows. The company which specialises in repairing windows which are steamed up, broken or damaged by replacing the panes – not the frames has grown rapidly as homeowners take advantage of their services.

Managing Director Brian Stanley feels that it's all about service. "Our product is simple. If your double glazing is misted up we can replace the glass at a fraction of the cost of a new window, in any type of frame, and with a new 5 year guarantee. But it's not just about saving people

money, although that obviously helps. Many tradespeople have struggled since last year and I honestly feel that during the good times a minority perhaps didn't focus on customer care as much as they should have done.

We make sure we turn up when we say we will, do the job the customer requires and leave their house as clean as a whistle. I often get comments back from customers on how they really didn't expect that sort of service which, in a way, is very sad for the service industry as a whole."

Cloudy2Clear service Wolverhampton and the surrounding

area and Brian is finding that his approach is a major factor in his success. "The truth is that it's not just the personal satisfaction that I get from doing a good job but also it makes good business sense. I get a huge amount of business from friends and family of people



I've done work for, which just goes to show how much a little bit of effort is appreciated."

So, if your windows are steamed up, broken or damaged give Brian a call for a free quotation on 0800 61 21 118 and he'll be happy to help!

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IN MY VIEW

with Mark Andrews



Charity, yes but wrong person to promote it

NOW, I've never heard of the charity Survivors of Domestic Abuse before, but if it offers help and support for victims of marital violence then it sounds like a very worthy cause.

So why, when it was collecting money at Tesco in Stourbridge, did it choose "White Dee" Deirdre Kelly from Benefits Street to promote its fundraising effort? I know we live in a television-obsessed age, where anyone who has appeared on the small screen is now considered to be some kind of celebrity. But does somebody, whose main claim to fame has been milking the benefits system for years on end, really make you want hand over your hard-earned cash? Surely they could have found a better ambassador.

□ □ □

ACTOR Will Smith has spoken to clarify his boycott of last month's Oscars. Although I'm not sure 'clarify' is the word.

"The media creates the 'us and them' and for me there is no us and them, it's 'we'," he said. Don't really know what he is talking about, but might have guessed it would somehow be the media's fault.

"There's a regression of America in general of separatism ... so for me it's more about putting my hand up and reminding my community, the Hollywood community, that we have to lead. Diversity is America's superpower, that is what makes our country great, and in Hollywood we have to be pushing forward even in a time of wider regression."

I think that's luvvie speak for he wants Hollywood to ensure all communities are represented. And he's right.

This year's Oscars nominations were a disgrace. Ten categories, 221 nominations, and all from the same narrow group.

Not a single actor from the Black Country. I definitely won't be attending next year.

□ □ □

BUT seriously though, amid all the eulogies to Sir Terry Wogan, the one comment that stood out was that he was the man who introduced 'the accent' to the airwaves.

Unashamedly proud of his Irishness, Wogan himself said his distinctive voice gave him a "classlessness" which meant he couldn't be pigeon-holed.

If only we were so enlightened when it comes to domestic accents. Sadly though, almost exactly half a century since he joined the BBC, there is still a perception that anybody with a Midland accent – regardless of their social background or educational achievement – is a figure of fun, okay for stand-up or playing the dimwit in sitcoms, but lacking authority when it comes to the serious stuff.

Want to do the difficult stuff? Better fake a Home Counties accent, old boy.

Clearly, some accents are more classless than others.



Cubs tuck into fish and chip at the Black Country Living Museum



Explorers — the youngsters run through the museum's streets



Eyes love cupcakes, says Georgie Young during the day out

Cubs get together to mark 100 years

More than 1,000 Cub Scouts descended upon the Black Country Living Museum, NICK HUMPHREYS reports

MORE than 1,250 youngsters and leaders descended on the Black Country Living Museum to celebrate 100 years of Cub Scouts.

Dubbed The Wildest Birthday Party Ever, children from across the region enjoyed an action-packed day out at the museum, with boat rides, a visit to the school and trip down a mine.

The event on Sunday, January 24, kicked off proceedings for the organisation's centenary year celebrations.

Mark Bache, assistant county commissioner for the West Mercia Cub Scouts, has been involved with cubs for more than 30 years.

He believes that despite the amount of games and gadgets available to youngsters nowadays, cubs is still as strong an institution as ever, and offers essential learning, fun and adventure for children. He said: "We've had lots of things going on and we've kicked things off with a bit of a party."

"They had a tour of the museum, they went in the school, in the mine, they have done all of it."

Adventure

"For me, it's about giving young people fun and adventure. We do all sorts of activities. The weather was a bit overcast but it was been warm enough for us and stayed dry which was the main thing."

"It was fantastic, the kids had a brilliant time and it was a great way to start our centenary year."

"We have our County Camp in July, which is called Jungle Jam 100, and there will be lots of different events at local clubs over the year."

"Our activities will finish for the year on December 16, when we'll be renewing the promise."

He added: "Scouting is the West Midlands



1st Bromley-Pensnett cubs get ready to sample a celebration cake shaped like a cub's shirt

is huge and we do some amazing things. We have also teamed up with Dudley Canal Trust and are taking 800 young people and adult volunteers through the tunnels under Dudley."

Alex Peace-Gadsby, chief commissioner for England, hopes the centenary celebrations

draw attention to the cubs, and inspire more youngsters to get involved.

She said: "So many great things are already in place. We've got some fantastic partners providing days out for cubs across the UK and there's a brilliant new website packed full of

resources to help make it an unforgettable year."

"By our reckoning, there will be more than 5,000 thanks events, adventure camps and Promise parties."

"The anniversary represents both an opportunity and a challenge. It's a great opportunity to inspire young people to stay to the very end of cubs and make the jump into Scouts."

"I'm so impressed and grateful at the way volunteers are using the year to provide an even more adventurous programme for our young people, with plenty of opportunities for camping and sleepovers – exactly the sort of thing that keeps cubs coming back for more."

"Whatever we do for Cubs100, we mustn't let this opportunity pass us by."

"Rather than celebrate behind closed doors we need to give the world a taste of the special fun, magic and optimism that has made cubs such an incredible success over the last 100 years."

There are around 150,000 cubs aged between eight and 10 in the UK.

Cubs forms the middle section of a Scout group, with the Beaver colony below and the Scout troop above.

There are seven challenge awards in scouting, with categories being Outdoor and Adventure, Beliefs and Attitudes, Community, Fitness, Creative and Global. Activity badges are awarded for demonstrating skill or achievement in a particular subject which may be an existing hobby or a new area of knowledge.

There are currently 34 different badges available. Cubs take part in activities as diverse as kayaking, abseiling, expeditions overseas, photography, climbing and zorbing. They also learn survival skills, first aid, computer programming, or even how to fly a plane. Organisers say it's a great way to have fun, make friends, get outdoors, express your creativity and experience the wider world.

Scouts develop skills including teamwork, time management, leadership, initiative, planning, communication, self-motivation, cultural awareness and commitment.

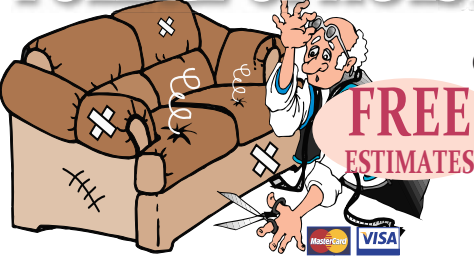
West Mercia Cub Scouts covers Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall, Wolverhampton and South Staffordshire. For further information, visit www.westmerciascouts.org.uk

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Every dog is a nuisance, even friendly ones

WHY does D White think that just because dog owners use Himley seven days a week, 52 weeks a year and pay a parking fee to do so, that should entitle them to call the shots about how the park is used?

Has he/she ever considered that may be the reason non-dog owners do not go as often. The dog owners allow their dogs to run free and defecate anywhere.

You may say that they pick up after them and I am sure the majority do, but can you honestly say that you pick up every little bit and what happens

if your dog has, how can I put it, a tummy upset. They also urinate anywhere and everywhere. Maybe this will explain why a dog-free zone picnic area is a good idea.

Your dog may be a very friendly dog that might be very cute and nice for you and people who like dogs. But my son at the age of three was knocked over and licked in the face by a large very friendly dog, off the lead. His owner just kept saying 'he won't hurt you' but try telling a three year old that.

Following this incident he developed a terror of dogs so bad that at seven

years old he jumped into the path of a car to avoid a dog on the pavement.

The fear was passed on to his younger sister and going out became almost impossible. The only thing we could do was to have a puppy of our own to get them used to dogs.

Now 45 years later history has repeated itself and my granddaughter is now terrified to go to the park due to an identical incident. To a non-dog lover every dog is a nuisance dog, even if they are on a lead.

J JAMES
Wordsley

Thank you for mom's home care

IT is difficult caring for a relative living and dying with cancer. My mom died last September having been diagnosed with Non-Hodgkin lymphoma in the previous six months.

She had good days when we could go out and about, and bad days when she needed to just sit and rest. The last five days were particularly hard when she was really poorly.

We could not have coped at home without the specialist care of the Dudley palliative team, who were exceptional.

From the carers who helped her to maintain her dignity to the district nurses and Macmillan nurses who controlled her pain. During the night Marie Curie nurses would sit with her, enabling me to have a reasonable night's sleep.

I cannot praise these angels enough for their dedication and compassion at one of the worst times in my life.

JACKIE FARRINGTON
Halesowen

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

POST

Dudley Chronicle,
Chronicle Editorial,
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Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES

EMAIL

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expressandstar.co.uk

Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

Write with care on high speed vehicles

THE January 28 edition of the Chronicle contained two detailed reports of horrific deaths and injuries caused by irresponsible drivers.

Your headline was 'Call for sports car road ban'. This featured a 21-year-old woman waiting at a bus stop killed by a driver as he raced at 100 mph in a 40 mph zone on Hagley Road West. He was racing against a friend in another car. One was a Mitsubishi Evolution, the other a BMW M3.

On page three you featured 'Speeding killer driver gets 40 months prison'. A Mercedes E250 driven at up to 93 mph, and at 61 mph at the moment of impact, killed a 39-year-old pedestrian.

Most folks would immediately demand that this kind of driving should be discouraged and drivers encouraged to behave more responsibly.

Yet in the same edition of the Chronicle the motoring correspondent writes in such a vein as to almost encourage high speeds in different models. Surely this could be construed as an invitation to risk death or serious injury to pedestrians and other road users.

PETER BIDDULPH
(address supplied)

Intelligent stop lights are needed

I have always thought road islands are better as there is always flow around them whereas with traffic lights I find I spend a lot of time waiting at a red light with no traffic coming across.

In this age when we are talking about driverless cars it must be possible to have more intelligent lights. I'm sure these have been around for some time, so why are they not used more extensively?

The main problem with the larger island is when the speed of the cars can be a problem to get on them. So how about speed bumps around larger islands?

It appears that those who manage our roads do not appear to know what they are doing. Here's some examples: £75,000 spent on traffic calming measures down Barrs Road - to no effect; time and money spent on Grange Road island - no better; two lanes into one at top of Mucklow Hill - chaos.

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'I hope lessons will be learned from tragedy'



Linda Cooksey, of Kinver, with an apology from the Department of Work and Pensions, following her brother's suicide

A SISTER who received a Government apology after her brother committed suicide when his benefits were cut says she hopes lessons have been learned.

Linda Cooksey brought a two-year campaign to a close when departments personally wrote to say sorry.

Mrs Cooksey's brother, Tim Salter, took his own life two years ago when he was threatened with eviction from his home in Meddins Lane, Kinver.

South Staffordshire coroner Andrew Haigh had ruled the sizeable reduction in Mr Salter's benefits had

been a 'major factor in his death'. The 53-year-old, who was partially sighted and suffered from mental health problems, had been left 'almost destitute' when threatened with repossession.

Mrs Cooksey, of Chandler Avenue, Kinver, who found her brother dead in his home, said she hoped people facing similar problems would know where to get help.

The Department for Work and Pensions, in a letter to Mrs Cooksey, said it accepted the Ombudsman's finding, which said there was an error administering Mr Salter's claim and its review had been 'insufficiently thorough'. It offered its apologies for the errors.



Tim Salter - died after benefits cut

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Parents jailed after baby had multiple fractures

A COUPLE have been jailed for child cruelty after their baby daughter was found to have terrible injuries.

The eight-month-old girl had seven fractured ribs and further fractures to both arms and a shoulder blade, Wolverhampton Crown Court heard.

She also had a 'very large' number of bruises over her body and limbs, said Bernard Linnemann, prosecuting.

The shocking discovery was only made after her father Wayne Jones called 999 just after midnight on February 12, 2014, to complain that he was feeling suicidal.

The mother was not at the flat in Halesowen after leaving the little girl in his care while she went out for the night and she had not come back.

Pain

When the apparently well-dressed baby was lifted by the paramedics she appeared to be in pain and was taken to hospital along with Jones.

"He was discharged but the child was found to have a very large number of bruises to her body and limbs.

"Further investigation found the fractures," said Mr Linnemann.

Experts concluded the injuries had been inflicted on at least two separate occasions during the preceding two to seven weeks.

Both 27-year-old Jones and the child's mother - Abbie Jones, aged 19 - were arrested the same day.

"The cruelty must have been serious, whoever inflicted it," said the prosecutor.

A relative had previously noticed bruising to the child's body and forehead.

Abbie Jones admitted causing or allowing a child to suffer serious injury.



Wayne Jones - two and a half year term



Abbie Jones - jailed for 20 months

Her former partner Wayne Jones pleaded not guilty but was convicted of the offence after a trial.

It remains unclear who was directly responsible for the injuries to the child.

Mr Benjamin Nicholls, for Wayne Jones, told the court that the defendant was not a violent man and was not drunk when making the phone call that led to the plight of the child being uncovered.

Mr Mac Davies, for Abbie Jones said: "She is ashamed and remorseful."

Wayne Jones, who was living in

Northfield, Birmingham, was jailed for two and a half years.

Abbie Jones, who lives in Halesowen was sent to jail up for 20 months.

Failed

Judge Kristina Montgomery QC reminded the pair of the injuries sustained by the little girl.

She told them: "There were fractures to seven of her ribs, both upper arms and one of her shoulder blades.

"You both failed to protect her from those assaults."

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Manufacturer is pressing ahead after best year yet

A MANUFACTURING specialist in Stourbridge is celebrating the best 12 months in its 67-year history after turnover more than doubled to £2.8m.

Worcester Presses, which provides a range of mechanical and hydraulic presses and coil processing equipment from its Titan Works factory, sold more than 50 machines last year following strong growth in the UK's automotive, aerospace and construction sectors.

JW Hunt Cup silverware at Molineux

A TROPHY that is part of the Black Country's football history will take pride of place at Molineux on a permanent basis.

The JW Hunt Cup, of which Sir Jack Hayward was a big supporter, is held annually with its final at Molineux. The trophy, contested for by local non-league football clubs, is being inducted at Wolves' home in its 90th year of existence.

The competition originated in 1925 with a meeting at the Molineux Hotel, some 50 from the stadium. Alex Hamil MBE, president of the Cup, said: "All of the memorabilia from 1926 is being inducted into the Steve Bull Stand at the Molineux."

A total of £8,000 will be donated to Sedgley's Beacon Centre for the Blind, the competition's charity partner.

The cup, silver-plated and valued at £5,000 some years ago, is held by Tivdale FC, who won the final in May.

It even completed its first export order to the US in 2015, with a reconditioned high-speed press prepared and sent to a customer in Detroit for use in producing riveted aluminium parts.

Bosses at the firm have taken on five new staff to cope with the demand for its services and are looking for even further growth when it exhibits at MACH 2016 in April.

Demand

"We've never seen demand reach this level before, especially in such a short space of time. If you think we've more than doubled turnover, you begin to understand the scale of what we've achieved," explained Russell Hartill, sales director at Worcester Presses.

"There has been specific interest in our Chin Fong range of presses, with 27 sold since last January – most from stock due to faster deliveries.

"Demand has been for the hugely popular GTX range and sales of our hydraulic presses are also up 40 per cent."

Worcester Presses, which now employs 13 people, has beaten off international competition thanks to its ability to customise its machines to suit bespoke configurations. These are completed by experienced specialists at its 15,000 sq ft workshop in Stourbridge.

Memorial to man who saved 10,000



From left, Jack Austin, Pete Lowe, Michael Smith, Stephen Higgs, Steve and Jayne Waltho unveil the tree

MAJOR Frank Foley was known as the 'British Schindler' for saving tens of thousands of Jews from the German Concentration camps.

Now, a tree and plaque have been officially unveiled in his adopted home town of Stourbridge to remember the heroic civil servant, who also worked for MI6 in Nazi Germany.

As a passport control officer at the British Embassy in Berlin he helped persecuted Jews flee Germany during the 1930s by issuing them with vital travel documents, many of them chil-

dren. He even hid people in his own home as the Nazis started rounding-up Jewish families.

Major Foley, who moved to Stourbridge after the war and died in 1958, was awarded the Righteous Among the Nations honour by the state of Israel in 1999. It is estimated that he saved more than 10,000 people who otherwise may have been murdered in concentration camps.

The memorial is now growing in Mary Stevens Park after being unveiled in front of Foley family mem-

bers, Dudley North MP Ian Austin, Dudley Council leader Councillor Pete Lowe, and Mayor of Dudley, Councillor Steve Waltho, and Jack Austin, ambassador for the Holocaust Educational Trust.

Major Foley was the great uncle of Stephen Higgs who, with wife, Veronica, and cousin, David, are his last relatives. Mr Higgs, who travelled from Carlisle, said: "We were obviously delighted and touched that Frank was going to be remembered in such a way in Stourbridge."

Dudley Group NHS Trust has a new boss

A NEW chairman has been appointed at the Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust.

Jenni Ord, who was previously chairman of Health Education West Midlands, took over the role from David Badger, who stepped down on December 31.

She said: "I'm absolutely delighted to take on this new and exciting role at a trust where I believe great patient care and excellent services are delivered to the people of Dudley and the surrounding areas."

"The Trust has had an excellent year to date with fantastic performance in many areas and I look forward to ensuring this success continues and excels further in the future through working collaboratively and productively with our colleagues in health, social care and the voluntary sector."

A new non-executive director, Julian Atkins, has also been appointed. Mr Atkins has succeeded David Bland as non-executive director and will be part of the Council of Governors' Strategy Committee.

Secrets of the Hoard are revealed at gallery

PEOPLE can find out more about the story of the Staffordshire Hoard in an interactive exhibition now on at Bilston Craft Gallery.

Treasure! Discovering the Staffordshire Hoard features high-quality replicas of objects in the Hoard, discovered near Walsall, showing how they might have looked when first crafted.

Visitors can also view a short film which includes an account of how it was found by metal detectorist Terry Herbert. Visitors can also try their hand at detecting metal, cleaning an artefact or don a costume to help bring Anglo-Saxon times to life.

The exhibition is on until March 12.

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Pair chippie in to raise funds for little girl's op

A LITTLE girl with cerebral palsy is a step closer to a potentially life-changing operation thanks to help from fundraisers in the Black Country

Born 11 weeks premature and weighing just 3lb 2oz, Georgie Gibbs was diagnosed with spastic diplegic cerebral palsy when a year old.

Now aged three, Georgie has to walk with splints attached to her legs or with a walking frame. She has daily exercises to relax her muscles.

Now her family in Worcester is fundraising for an operation in America, which will cost around £65,000 and is aimed at helping Georgie walk unaided.

Coseley father and son Archie and Steve Payton, aged 76 and 54, decided to help after they met Georgie's family at a car boot sale.

The Paytons, along with their local chippy Chipton Fryer & Cafe, on Bloomfield Road, Tipton, have raised more than £1,000.

The family is waiting to hear from officials at NHS England's Commissioning through Evaluation Programme, to find out if Georgie can have the operation in the UK.

Georgie's mother Clare, 41, said: "We'll find out in March if we can go ahead with having the operation in this country, but if not we have an April 18 confirmed date for America. Georgie is a determined little soul and we will fight tooth and nail either way for her to have the operation." Archie and Steve said Georgie had 'stolen their hearts'. Archie added: "We'll move heaven and earth to help that little girl."

To help visit www.gofundme.com/help-georgie



Georgie with mother Clare Gibbs with fundraisers Steve (left) and Archie Payton and Bunty Singh-Binning

Go behind scenes at Holden's Brewery

ALE fans can go behind the scenes at a landmark Black Country brewery when Holden's in Woodseton offers hour-long tours on the first Saturday of each month in April, May and June.

The tours begin from the Holden's bottle shop off Sedgley Road and finish with a session in Holden's new tasting room. There are up to a dozen places on each tour and they cost £12.50 per person.

Tours were started after the completion of the modernisation of the brewery during its centenary year of 2015. Tours can be booked by calling 01902 880051.

The brewery's famous beers include Black Country Bitter, Black Country Special Bitter, Black Country Mild, and Golden Glow.

The family's career in brewing began when Edwin Holden and his wife Lucy Blanche took over the Britannia Inn in Netherton, before moving to the Park Inn where brewing equipment left by previous owners inspired Edwin to make his own beer, which became popular throughout the Black Country. The brewery also has a popular line of its own bottled beer.

£7.6m fund for flagship project to boost skills

THE Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) has approved £7.6m funding for the flagship Elite Centre for Manufacturing Skills, which will open for business in 2017.

The funding has been allocated through the LEP's Growth Deal which is transforming the Black Country.

The Elite Centre will function as an employer-led training facility for the Black Country, designed to improve productivity and growth in the high value manufacturing (HVM) sector.

The Black Country LEP has been instrumental in ensuring the project will deliver provision that doesn't currently exist in the Black Country.

The LEP has brought together partners from the HVM sector and education including the University of Wolverhampton, Dudley College, Confederation of British Metalforming, Cast Metals Federation and the Institute of Cast Metals Engineers.

Specialist

The partners are investing an additional £4.15m into the centre bringing the total project value to £11.75m. The Elite Centre will provide specialist training in toolmaking; foundry; patternmaking; metalforming; forging; advanced CNC; manufacturing management, leadership and project management. The training will be delivered through both apprenticeships and short courses.

The Elite Centre will be established as a non-profit making organisation with an industry-led board of directors. The project will be led by the University of Wolverhampton. The Elite Centre will follow a 'hub and spoke' model with equipment and facilities being installed across four sites in the Black Country, which will re-generate two brown-



LEP chairman Stewart Towle

field sites. The Elite Centre is anticipated to become the new Institute of Technology in the Black Country. The hub will be the 800 sq m regeneration of the university's Springfield Brewery site in Wolverhampton.

The 'foundry and patternmaking spoke' will be located on a site adjacent to an existing foundry in Dudley Port.

Metal joining and advanced machining training will be covered by the installation of new equipment and the use of existing equipment at the recently opened Dudley Advance at Dudley College.

Stewart Towle, chairman of the Black Country LEP, said: "This approval of funding is fantastic news for the high value manufacturing sector in the Black Country."

"Through the Elite Centre the LEP will be able to remove barriers to business growth by supporting employers in key industry sub-sectors to invest in skills."

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Talk on the Zulu War

THE Anglo-Zulu War will be the subject of the next meeting of the Amblecote History Society on Wednesday, February 10.

Historian Max Keen will give a talk at 7.30pm in The Lehr Theatre at the Ruskin Centre, with tales from the battles of Isandhlwana and Rorke's Drift, as depicted in the epic 1964 film Zulu. Admission is £2 for non-members.

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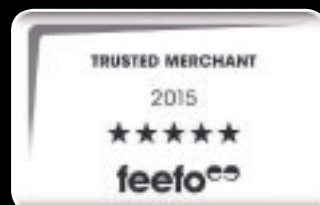
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Keep your head down well away from the barbed wire above

CRAWLING under barbed wire, ice cold plunges and leaping through fire – extreme obstacles designed to test the human body to the absolute limit, ALEX ROSS writes.

And just some of the 200 plus challenges more than 1,000 competitors face each year when taking on the Tough Guy in Perton.

Beginning with a cross-country trail and ending at the Killing Fields, participants risk dehydration, hypothermia, electric shocks, sprains and broken bones. So what better way to prove my toughness to my colleagues than by signing up. My announcement was met with laughs. Although I regularly go to the gym and run, I'm the first to admit that I'm no 'tough guy'.

Last minute gym sessions and six mile cross-country runs followed in the days before the challenge to the point I dared to claim I was prepared. And it all started so easily. Two miles in – a brisk jog with obstacles to leap over and crawl under – it was going so well, only a few beads of sweat came down my forehead and a splattering of mud over my legs.

But oh no. This country trail was the calm before the storm. It began with the Colditz Wars. A wooden structure webbed with rope with only one way to get past it – pull, drag and haul yourself to the top before tumbling down the other side. Then a leap through burning bales of hay followed by crawling through a seemingly endless line of tyres. This was just the beginning to my first Tough Guy – I'd only just entered the Killing Fields. Claustrophobic? The Underground Interrogation Pits and Vitetong Tunnels would be your worst nightmare. I entered the

dark, murky underground of the pits, lying on my front and moved forward slowly, carefully avoiding hanging wires each producing an electric shock when touched.

Then, still in the pitch black, it was on to the tunnels. Long concrete cylinders I somehow managed to haul myself through, partly thanks to people around me pushing and shoving me. On I plodded, by now my body smeared in mud and sweat, to the Paradise Climb, anything but paradise. A 50ft high climb before a scary walk on cargo net while trying not to peer down at the ground far below.

Scrambling

Worse was round the corner – an ice cold man-made lake. I swam ahead to a shallower part of the lake where huge logs were placed across the water surface. This was the Death Plunge. I was to now duck my whole body under the water again and again.

Scrambling out of the lake The Brandenburg Wall stood high in front of me – a 40ft near vertical climb. But two more lakes – the North Face Lake and Dragons Pool – followed.

It was the worst obstacle which had been saved till last. I glided along the Green Rolling Hills before faced with Viagra Falls. Leaping into a deep lake, I then clambered up a steep hill beneath hanging electric eels – but by this point I didn't care.

One electric shock after another as I got to the peak before almost falling down the other side past the finish line and onto a bale of hay. I collapsed in the make-shift changing area. My body was aching all over. But I found the energy to take a selfie with my medal. Done, dusted. I'd conquered Tough Guy!



Proud and relieved – reporter Alex Ross with his medal

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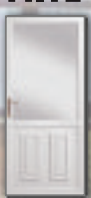


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Collision closes Brettell Lane

A BLACK Country road was temporarily closed after a crash involving two cars near a busy junction.

Four people were treated at the scene following Saturday's smash on Delph Road in Brierley Hill.

Police closed the A461 Brettell Lane at around 5pm while they waited for the vehicles to be removed.

Firefighter Rob Fullwood, watch commander at Brierley Hill Fire Station, said: "There were two cars involved and four casualties. They were all out of the vehicles by the time we arrived so we didn't need to cut anyone free."

"The ambulance service checked them over one the side of the road and police closed one of the roads while they waited for the vehicles to be taken away."

Jack's Minecraft museum



Jack Probert, aged 8, has created a Minecraft version of the Black Country Living Museum

AN EIGHT-YEAR-OLD set himself the task of recreating the entire Black Country Living Museum using popular video game Minecraft.

Young Jack Probert cannot get enough of the region's premier heritage attraction and it has become favourite place for days out with the family.

He also has a passion for the game Minecraft, a virtual landscape allowing players to build anything they can imagine by placing blocks.

In the days following Christmas, with the museum closed to visitors, Jack decided he would build his own virtual replical museum as his latest Minecraft project.

Jack's father, Alan, said: "It is fair to say we go to the museum quite a bit – we only live 100 yards away as the crow flies. We took Jack there quite a few times last

Burst water main causes traffic chaos

A BURST water main caused traffic chaos on a main road in the Black Country.

The A458 Park Road in Cradley was closed on Friday afternoon, forcing traffic and buses to be diverted.

The busy road, which connects Stourbridge and Halesowen, was shut between Colley Lane and Barrack Lane at around noon as emergency repairs were carried out to the water main and motorists were warned to expect delays.

Water could be seen flowing down the road three hours after the road was closed.

The closure saw traffic backing up in the area. The number 9 bus to Birmingham had to be diverted via Park Lane because of the leak.

It came as another burst water main caused problems near West Bromwich town centre. One lane of Trinity Way was closed near the junction with High Street at around 3pm.

Paramedics not on board for thousands of emergency calls

PARAMEDICS were not on board emergency vehicles sent to thousands of 999 calls across the Black Country during the past four years, figures reveal.

Instead, ambulance technicians or emergency care assistants – both less qualified – attended.

Figures show that, in total, paramedics didn't attend 23,912 call-outs during the period.

This includes 86 'red 1' emergencies, the highest category for patients who have suffered cardiac arrest or who have stopped breathing.

West Midlands Ambulance Service, which is based in Brierley Hill, said it was 'fully committed' to achieving its ambition of having a paramedic on every emergency vehicle. Bosses have recently launched a recruitment drive to find 150 student paramedics to bolster numbers.

During the past 12 months, there were some 3,674 emergency call outs in the Black Country not attend by paramedics.

The ambulance service has defended the figures, saying these 23,912 call outs over four years make up just 1.8 per cent of the total call outs for crews across the region.

Spokesman Claire Brown said: "West Midlands Ambulance Service is the best performing ambulance service in the country, with all staff doing a fantastic job responding to an average of 3,000 emergency calls a day around the region."

"As a trust we have the highest ratio of paramedics on the frontline of any UK ambulance service and we are fully committed to achieving our ambition of having a paramedic on every emergency vehicle."

"All our staff are developed and trained to a high standard, which means we continue to provide the very best care to patients."

Park concert to mark milestone

BIRMINGHAM band Ocean Colour Scene are marking the 20th anniversary of their best known album Moseley Shoals with a special open air concert in the city this summer.

Moseley Shoals in Moseley Park is planned for Friday, July 15.

It will see the band performing songs from the album including the major hit Riverboat Song.

Tickets for the concert are sale from the www.moseleyfolk.co.uk website.

Ocean Colour Scene will be supported by Reverend and the Makers and The Sherlocks.

The band, whose members include Steve Cradock and Simon Fowler, formed in Moseley in 1989.

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Cakes by Caterina Bianchi has exhibited at previous wedding fairs, and this year there will be more stalls than ever

WOLVERHAMPTON Magazine is hosting its fifth annual wedding fair and due to its continued success the show will be held at Molineux for the first time.

The wedding fair has previously been staged at The Mount Hotel, Tettenhall, but to accommodate growing demand is moving to a larger venue.

Brides-to-be are expected to flock to Wolverhampton Magazine's Wedding Fair planned for Sunday, March 20, from 11am to 4pm. The event will be held in the stylish WV1 suite, overlooking the pitch, and the goal is to ensure visitors walk away with ideas galore for the big day. The increased space means people will be able to browse up to 45 stands.

The fair, sponsored by Cousins Furniture, will boast specialists who can cater for every requirement, from the all-important dress to the transport. Exciting hair and make-up demonstrations will also be taking place. Brides can register on arrival for free admission.

For more information about exhibiting at the fair call 01902 319693 or email deana.jones@expressandstar.co.uk

Shock as assaults on police has reached 440

POLICE officers in the West Midlands have been assaulted more than 440 times in the line of duty, new figures reveal.

The number has risen from the previous year when there were 419 reports of police officers attacked from March 2013 to March 2014.

In the 12 months from March 2014, Wolverhampton had the most officer assaults with 89; then Walsall at 53; Dudley at 41 and Sandwell came in with the lowest at 21. Overall, 238 officers were assaulted across Birmingham across the whole of the city, making the total number of assaults 442.

Praise

West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner David Jamieson says he is shocked by the figures and he heaped praise on 'public serving' police officers.

He said: "It is outrageous that during the course of their duty police officers are attacked. They are hard-working public servants who should be allowed to go carry out their job without fear of violence."

"It is always shocking to see figures relating to these sorts of attacks and I want

By David Callaghan

those responsible to feel the full force of the law. It is the job of police officers to keep the public safe and it is totally unacceptable that they have to endure such treatment."

The statistics were published by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of the Constabulary and were collected by the Home Office.

West Midlands Police spokeswoman Gina Lycey said: "Whilst one assault on an officer is one too many, the nature of policing carries some risk. In the West Midlands our officers are trained in personal safety techniques. They are also suitably equipped to ensure that they are able to discharge their duties as safely as possible in protecting our communities."

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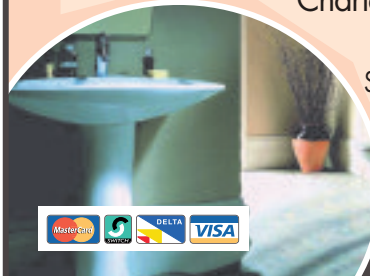
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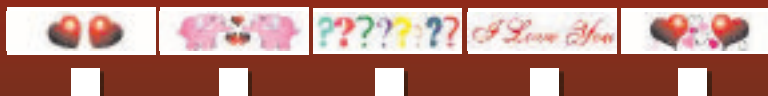


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Give emotional music a Brakes

ALBUMS

by Leon Burakowski

THE seventh studio album in ten years from Turin Brakes, **Lost Property**, finds the quartet producing sophisticated, emotional music with a hint of West Coast rock and a whole heap of honesty.

The distinctive voice of Olly Knights holds the attention. Highlights include Brighter Than The Dark, Jump Start and the gently stirring anthems Hope We Make It and Save You.

Catch Turin Brakes at Birmingham's Glee Club on March 8.

Curve Of The Earth is the most commercial album yet from London band **Mystery Jets**. It's already their most successful and deservedly so because after ten years and six albums they have crafted a lithe, sleek sound that melds hints of psychedelic rock with a radio-friendly pop sensibility.

Singer Blaine Harrison is at his best, even exercising a soulful falsetto on the hazy **Midnight's Mirror**.

A cosmic theme runs through many of the songs including the blissed-out Kinks-ish **Saturnine** and one of the other highlights, 1985, which starts as a delicate piano ballad and explodes with a fuzzy guitar riff that reaches for the stars.

Mystery Jets have a gig at the O2 Institute in Digbeth, Birmingham, on Thursday, February 18, with support from 17-year-old Declan McKenna.

Australian singer and songwriter **Sia** Furler, a former Jamiroquai backing singer and frontwoman for 90s outfit **Zero 7**, originally found success writing songs for such as Beyonce, Rihanna and Christina Aguilera.



Seven studio albums in ten years and Turin Brakes are maturing nicely

Then in 2014 she had a massive hit in her own right with **Chandelier** and, while apparently shunning celebrity by hiding her face, got a lot more attention. Her sixth solo album **1000 Forms of Fear** was the breakthrough because she had cannily held back some of her best songs for herself.

But on her latest, **This Is Acting**, the 40-year-old's songs are all co-written with others and, frankly, no amount of power or vocal gymnastics can hide the fact that they sound like rejects. The opening salvo, **Bird Set Free** and **Alive**, may have been intended for Adele but I can see why she would knock back such fodder. We also get Sia sounding like a lightweight Lady Gaga on **Move Your Body**, Rihanna-like on **Cheap Thrills** or Beyonce-lite on **Sweet Design**. It's production line pop/R&B, kind of faceless.

Singer Ian Astbury and riff master Billy Duffy sometimes conjure their

old swagger on **The Cult's** tenth studio album, **Hidden City**, particularly on **Hinterland**, **Dance The Night**, **Goat** and **Heathens**. The goth rockers are at Birmingham's O2 Institute on March 1.

Seattle rockers **Night Beats** bring classic garage rock roaring into the 21st century with guitars that fuzz, twang and wail, and plenty of outlaw attitude, on **Who Sold My Generation**.

Highlights include the recent single **No Cops**, plus **Power Child**, **Sunday Mourning** and **Burn to Breathe** from a band that draw on **The Stooges**, **The Cramps**, 60s **Dylan** and **The Yardbirds**.

If the nine tracks on **4½** are Porcupine Tree mainman **Steven Wilson's** leftovers between his fourth and fifth albums, then they are pretty much haute cuisine. The prog rock singer/songwriter's 38-minute album, including a couple of instrumentals, is richly textured and, for the uninitiated, sometimes recalls early Genesis.

A man for all seasons



Violin and Villa home shirt, it could only be Nigel Kennedy, who made a triumphant return to Symphony Hall and Vivaldi

Nigel Kennedy,
Symphony Hall, Birmingham
NOT many classical concerts start with a cry of 'Up the Villa' from the audience. Not even in Birmingham.

But if the violinist happens to be the world's most famous Aston Villa fan (sorry, Your Highness), then different rules apply.

Even Villa's 4-0 drubbing at home by Manchester City in the FA Cup the day before couldn't dampen Nigel Kennedy's enthusiasm. I think I spied the Villa away shirt under his over-sized blazer when he kicked off the first half of his three-hour concert, and he certainly had the claret and blue shirt on for the second, emblazoned with the player's name **Abonglahor**. Certainly most of the banter with the audience was about his Villa obsession, including his desire to see new owners at the helm.

Football chat in a prestigious concert hall, nothing would please the former wunderkind of classical music more.

He was the spiky-haired young man who shocked the classic world with his irreverent attitude, virtuoso ability and by selling three million copies of his

REVIEW

by Leon Burakowski

1989 recording of Vivaldi's **The Four Seasons**. That gave him rock star status.

He still has spiky hair, a dubious taste in clothes (day-glo yellow trainers, baggy jeans and what appeared to be a jacket inspired by a bin bag), clowns around and fist-bumps his fellow musicians. But at 59 his ability is better than ever. He is even prepared to revisit **The Four Seasons**, albeit with a twist.

The first half saw Kennedy play his own compositions, a series called **Dedications** inspired and in tribute to Kennedy's musical heroes. These include Polish jazz guitarist **Jarek Smietana** (whose daughter **Alicja Smietana** is a violinist in Kennedy's band), violinists **Stephane Grappelli** and **Isaac Stern**, and the still living US fiddle player **Mark O'Connor**.

These pieces were blends of jazz, folk and rock placed within a classical context, and they worked superbly. This was partly because Kennedy's

restless energy and infectious enthusiasm spread to his entire ensemble of top-notch musicians from the jazz and classical scenes across Europe.

Whether classic or contemporary, Kennedy stamps his foot and tends to yell 'yeah' like he is at a hoe-down and he cajoles, teases and challenges the other musicians to keep up with him, which made for some dazzling duels.

The **Four Seasons** also got jazz textures in the star violinist's reworking, entitled **The New Four Seasons**. I don't know if they really added anything to Vivaldi's great work but they didn't detract from it. He remained true to the spirit of the original work, with all Vivaldi's verve intact. Kennedy played with such intensity that you could afterwards see the hairs hanging from his worn bow. He showed the same vigour which made his name more than a quarter of a century ago.

He ended the night with an elegiac piece dedicated to Sir Terry Wogan (who put him on TV) and Polish jazz saxophonist **Janusz Muniak**, both of whom had died earlier in the day. It was a sombre end to a night of joyous and superlative musicianship from the violin man for all seasons.

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Oh What a Night!

Jersey Boys comes to
Wolverhampton – Page 23

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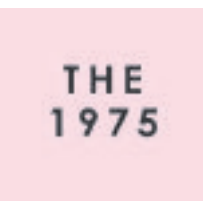
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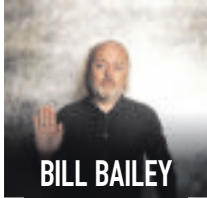
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Alexander Armstrong



Tomorrow, 7.30pm
Symphony Hall, B'ham
The much-loved presenter of Pointless, Alexander Armstrong, is returning to his roots as a classically trained musician and is set to delight in his first concert tour.
Visit www.thsh.co.uk

Of Mice And Men



Tonight - February 13
The Rep, B'ham
The acclaimed production of John Steinbeck's drama set during America's Great Depression, directed by Roxana Silbert, returns by popular demand, this time with a new cast.
Visit www.birmingham-rep.co.uk

Ken Dodd



Sunday, 7pm
Prince Of Wales, Cannock
A true British institution, Ken Dodd has been making people laugh for decades. His stand-up shows are the stuff of legend, often going on well past midnight.
Visit www.wlct.org/cannock

Private Lives



Monday - Feb 13
New Alexandra Theatre, B'ham
A revival of Noel Coward's sophisticated comedy stars Tom Chambers in the 1930s story about divorcees who meet on honeymoon with new spouses.
Visit www.atgtickets.com/venues/new-alexandra-theatre-birmingham

POP & ROCK

Special Kinda Madness: Specials & Madness Tribute Band
Sat at 8.55pm, £8
The Robin 2, Bilston, WV14 7LJ. 01902 401211

Nik Turner's New Space Ritual
Thu at 7.30pm,
The Robin 2, Bilston, WV14 7LJ. 01902 401211

SayWeCanFly
Sat at 6pm - 10pm,
The Institute, Digbeth, Birmingham, B5 6DY.
Call 0121 643 0428

Loyle Carner
Tue at 7.30pm - 11pm,
Hare & Hounds, Kings Heath, Birmingham, B14 7JZ.
Call 0844 870 0000

Montparnasse
Sat at 8pm,
mac, Cannon Hill Road, Birmingham, B12 9QH.
Call 0121 446 3232

Telegram
Thu at 7pm - 11pm,
Hare & Hounds, Kings Heath, Birmingham, B14 7JZ.
Call 0844 870 0000

Bowling For Soup
Thu at 7pm, £20
O2 Academy Birmingham, B1 1DB. Call 0121 622 8250

The Style Councillors
Sat at 7pm,
The RoadHouse Birmingham, B30 3DZ. Call 0121 246 2273

The Crookes
Fri at 7pm,
The Rainbow, Birmingham, B12 0LD. Call 0121 753 1818

Soufly
Sun at 7pm,
Wolverhampton Slade Rooms, WV1 1RQ. 0870 320 7000

The Game: Documentary 2 Tour
Mon at 7pm,
O2 Academy Birmingham, 1 B1 1DB. Call 0121 622 8250

The Temple Brothers: Everly Brothers Tribute
Sat at 7.30pm,
Prince Of Wales Centre, Cannock, WS11 1DE.
Call 01543 578762

Grouper
Fri at 9.30pm, Sat at 9.30pm,
The Jam House, Birmingham, B31QU.
Call 0121 200 3030

Spring King
Thu at 7.30pm - 10.30pm,
Hare & Hounds, Kings Heath, Birmingham, B14 7JZ.
Call 0844 870 0000

Joe Jackson
Thu at 7pm - 11pm,
The Institute, Digbeth, Birmingham, B5 6DY.
Call 0121 643 0428

Augustana
Sat at 7pm,
O2 Academy Birmingham, B1 1DB. Call 0121 622 8250

Jack Jones: A Celebration Of 100 Years Of Frank Sinatra
Fri at 7.30pm,
Birmingham Town Hall, B3 3DQ. Call 0121 780 3333

Danny Bryant
Wed at 7.30pm,
The Robin 2, Bilston, WV14 7LJ. 01902 401211

U2 2:U2 Tribute
Fri at 7.30pm,
The Robin 2, Bilston, WV14 7LJ. 01902 401211

The Winery Dogs
Fri at 7pm - 11pm,
The Institute, Digbeth, Birmingham, B5 6DY.
Call 0121 643 0428

FOLK & ACOUSTIC

Alexandra Jayne
Tue at 8.30pm,
The Jam House, Birmingham, B31QU.
Call 0121 200 3030

The Villagers
Sun at 7pm - 11.30pm,
The Glee Club, Birmingham, B5 4TD.
Call 0871 472 0400

BLUES & JAZZ

The Subs
Thu at 9.30pm,
The Jam House, Birmingham, B31QU. Call 0121 200 3030

Jarrold Dickenson
Thu at 7.45pm - 11pm,
The Glee Club, Birmingham, B5 4TD. Call 0871 472 0400

CLASSICAL & OTHER MUSIC

CBSO 2015-16: Beethoven Piano Concertos
Wed at 2.15pm, £12.50 - £43
Symphony Hall, Birmingham, B1 2EA. Call 0121 780 3333

Ex Cathedra: I Was Glad
Sun at 4pm - 6pm,
£9.50 - £35
Birmingham Town Hall, B3 3DQ. Call 0121 780 3333

Lunchtime Guitar Concert
Fri at 1.10pm,
Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, B3 3DH.
Call 0121 303 1966

Lunchtime Organ Concert: Thomas Trotter
Mon at 1pm,
Birmingham Town Hall, B3 3DQ.
Call 0121 780 3333

Alexander Armstrong: A Year Of Songs
Fri at 7.30pm - 9.30pm,
Symphony Hall, Birmingham, B1 2EA.
Call 0121 780 3333

CBSO 2015-16 - Family Film Favourites
Sun at 2.30pm, £10
Symphony Hall, Birmingham, B1 2EA.
Call 0121 780 3333

BICS 2015/16 Maria Joao Pires In Recital
Thu at 7.30pm,
Birmingham Town Hall, B3 3DQ.
Call 0121 780 3333

THEATRE

Horrible Histories: Groovy Greeks
Sat at 10.30am,
Theatre Severn, Shrewsbury, SY3 8FT.
Call 01743 281281

Out Of Chaos: Macbeth
Thu at 8pm,
mac, Cannon Hill Road, Birmingham, B12 9QH.
Call 0121 446 3232

Who's Afraid Of Virginia Woolf?
Tue - Thu at 7.30pm
Stafford Gatehouse Theatre, ST16 2LT.
Call 01785 254653

The Gruffalo's Child
Fri at 10.30am, 1.30pm,
Stafford Gatehouse Theatre, ST16 2LT.
Call 01785 254653

Of Mice And Men
Tue - Thu at 7.30pm, Sat at 2pm, 7.30pm, Mon at 7.30pm, Tue at 2pm, 7pm, Wed at 7.30pm, Thu at 2pm, 7.30pm, £8.50 - £35
Birmingham Repertory Theatre, B1 2EP.
Call 0121 236 4455

Freezin
Sat at 7.30pm,
Stafford Gatehouse Theatre, ST16 2LT.
Call 01785 254653

Gary Clarke Company: Coal
Thu at 8pm - 10pm, £8 - £12
DanceExchange, Birmingham, B5 4TB.
Call 441902566159

Jack And The Beanstalk
Fri at 11am, 3pm, Sat at 1pm,
New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham, B5 4DS.
Call 0844 871 3011

Private Lives
Mon - Thu at 7.30pm,
New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham, B5 4DS.
Call 0844 871 3011

Simply The Best Divas
Sun at 7.30pm,
New Alexandra Theatre, Birmingham, B5 4DS.
Call 0844 871 3011

The Solid Life Of Sugar Water
Fri at 8pm, Sat at 2.30pm - 8pm,
Birmingham Repertory Theatre, B1 2EP. Call 0121 236 4455

Matthew Bourne's Sleeping Beauty
Tue at 7.30pm, Wed at 2pm, 7.30pm, Thu at 7.30pm, £18.50 - £42.50
Birmingham Hippodrome, B5 4TB. Call 0844 338 5000

Birmingham Royal Ballet And Royal Ballet Sinfonia
Sat at 7.30pm,
Symphony Hall, Birmingham, B1 2EA.
Call 0121 780 3333

Motionhouse: Broken
Tue at 8pm, Wed at 8pm,
mac, Cannon Hill Road, Birmingham, B12 9QH.
Call 0121 446 3232

An Inspector Calls
Fri at 7.30pm, Sat at 2.30pm, 7.30pm, £11.75 - £27.75
Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, WV1 1DE. Call 01902 573320

Stags And Hens
Thu at 7.30pm,
Prince Of Wales Centre, Cannock, WS11 1DE.
Call 01543 578762

The Crows Plucked Your Sinews
Tue - Thu at 8pm
Birmingham Repertory Theatre, B1 2EP. Call 0121 236 4455

Jersey Boys
Tue at 7.30pm, Wed at 2.30pm, 7.30pm, Thu at 2.30pm, 7.30pm, £27.50 - £49.50
Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, WV1 1DE.
Call 01902 573320

Tantalise #Take2 - The Ultimate Ladies Night
Fri - Sat at 8pm - 3am,
Quantum Centre, Birmingham, B40 1NT. Call 0121 780 4141

COMEDY

Juice Comedy
Fri at 7.30pm,
Stafford Gatehouse Theatre, ST16 2LT.
Call 01785 254653

Ken Dodd
Sun at 7pm,
Prince Of Wales Centre, Cannock, WS11 1DE.
Call 01543 578762

Tony Law: Frillemorphosis
Thu at 7pm,
Wolverhampton Slade Rooms, WV1 1RQ.
Call 0870 320 7000

Gary Delaney
Sun at 8pm - 11pm,
The Glee Club, Birmingham, B5 4TD.
Call 0871 472 0400

CLUBBING

Nicolas Lutz & Francesco Del Garda
Sat - Sun at 10pm - 6am,
The Rainbow, Birmingham, B12 0LD.
Call 0121 753 1818

Marcia Carr & E Double D
Sat - Sun at 9pm - 2am,
Hare & Hounds, Kings Heath, Birmingham, B14 7JZ.
Call 0844 870 0000

Vertigo
Sat at 9pm,
The Victoria, Birmingham, B1 1BN. Call 0121 633 9439

Keeping It Souful
Fri - Sat at 9pm - 2am, £
The Victoria, Birmingham, B1 1BN. Call 0121 633 9439

Propaganda
Fri - Sat at 10.30pm - 3.30am,
O2 Academy Birmingham, B1 1DB.
Call 0121 622 8250

Highgrade
Fri - Sat at 10.30pm - 5am,
The Institute, Digbeth, Birmingham, B5 6DY.
Call 0121 643 0428

Leftfoot Presents Mala At Hare And Hounds
Fri - Sat at 9pm - 3am,
Hare & Hounds, Kings Heath, Birmingham, B14 7JZ.
Call 0844 870 0000

Sweet
Sat - Sun at 9pm - 3am,
Hare & Hounds, Kings Heath, Birmingham, B14 7JZ.
Call 0844 870 0000

Hospitality
Sat - Sun at 10pm - 6am,
The Rainbow, Birmingham, B12 0LD.
Call 0121 753 1818

OTHER EVENTS

Jewellery & Watch Birmingham
Sun - Thu at 9am - 4pm, Free
The NEC, Birmingham, B40 1NT.
Call 0121 780 4141

Spring Fair
Sun at 9am - 4pm, Free
The NEC, Birmingham, B40 1NT.
Call 0121 780 4141

Check out full listings in **the ticket** in Friday's Express & Star

The Jersey Boys are back in town

ONE of the West End's biggest hits of recent years, Jersey Boys, is at Wolverhampton's Grand Theatre from Tuesday to Saturday, February 20.

Whilst still packing them into the Piccadilly Theatre in London, the touring production about the career of American pop group The Four Seasons, starring Matt Corner as Frankie Valli, is a surefire crowd-pleaser.

Full of Four Seasons hits from the golden era of pop in the 1960s and 70s, it also pulls no punches in its story about how a bunch of New Jersey boys who seemed destined to become crooks and gangsters took the music world by storm, but at some considerable personal cost.

Worldwide

Sam Ferriday will play Bob Gaudio, Lewis Griffiths is Nick Massi and Stephen Webb is Tommy DeVito, all continuing in their roles from previous tour dates. Michael Pickering will join the cast to play the role of Frankie Valli at certain performances.

Also joining the touring cast will be Mark Heenehan as Gyp DeCarlo, Joel Elferink as Bob Crewe, Joe Maxwell as Norm Waxman and Samantha Hull as Francine.

Jersey Boys has been seen by more 22 million people worldwide and is firmly established as one of London's most popular shows. It was also turned into a movie by actor/director Clint Eastwood.

The Four Seasons sold 100 million records worldwide, all before they turned 30. The show includes all the



Sam Ferriday, Stephen Webb, Matt Corner and Lewis Griffiths in Jersey Boys

major hits, including Sherry, Walk Like A Man, December, 1963 (Oh What a Night), Big Girls Don't Cry, My Eyes Adored You, Beggin', Let's Hang On (To What We've Got), Bye Bye Baby, Can't Take My Eyes Off You, Working My Way Back To You, Rag Doll and Who Loves You.

Written by Marshall Brickman and Rick Ellice, Jersey Boys has won Olivier and Tony awards for Best New Musical, among 57 major awards worldwide.

See www.grandtheatre.co.uk for further details or call the box office on 01902 429 212.

Ballet gets a revamp-ire

A GOTHIC romance from the choreographer who created the male dancers' Swan Lake and passionate ballet The Car Man is set to thrill audiences at Birmingham Hippodrome from Tuesday to Saturday.

Danced to the music of Tchaikovsky, Matthew Bourne's Sleeping Beauty takes the familiar fairy story and twists it into a dazzling whirl of punk fairies and vampires. It goes from the opulent Edwardian era to modern day, delivered with irreverent humour and lots of style and vigour.

Created for his New Adventures company's 25th birthday in 2012, Sleeping Beauty was a hit at the Hippodrome a year later and this revival comes to Birmingham after a successful run at London Sadler's Wells.

Returning to the central role of Aurora is rising star Ashley Shaw, a role shared with Cordelia Braithwaite in her first principal role with New Adventures. Her hero Leo will once again be played by Bromsgrove-born dancer Chris Trenfield and Dominic North, who has appeared in more New Adventures productions than any other dancer. North was nominated as Outstanding Male Dancer at The National Dance Awards for his performance as Edward Scissorhands.

The twin roles of Dark Fairy Carabosse and her sinister son Caradoc will be shared by two of New Adventures' most charismatic performers, Adam Maskell and Tom Clark, the latter making his debut in a principal role.

For more information see www.birminghamhippodrome.com or for tickets call 0844 338 5000.

Dance highlights at Symphony Hall

THE Royal Ballet Sinfonia takes centre stage at Birmingham's Symphony Hall on Saturday in an evening celebrating classic balletic highlights.

Compered by Birmingham Royal Ballet's director David Bintley, the evening will include music and dance excerpts from some of the company's most famous productions, such as David Bintley's The Seasons, Frederick Ashton's The Dream, and Kenneth Macmillan's Romeo and Juliet. The latter is being performed at Birmingham Hippodrome later this month.

The evening will also include a performance by students from Birmingham's Elmhurst School for Dance. See www.thsh.co.uk

All-star jazz band in Art Blakey tribute

MARKING the passing of jazz great Art Blakey 25 years ago, saxophonist Jean Toussaint brings his Roots and Herbs band to celebrate and explore the music of the Blue Note legend and his Jazz Messengers.

The gig at Wolverhampton University's Arena venue tomorrow night (Fri) will feature an all-star line-up of trombonist Dennis Rollins, pianist Julian Joseph, trumpeter Byron Wallen, Daniel Casimir on bass and drummer Shane Forbes. See the arena@wlv.ac.uk website.

That's the same night veteran crooner Jack Jones performs his Jack Sings Frank tribute to Sinatra at the Symphony Hall.

US rock invasion at city gig venues

GIG highlights include Nashville rockers The Cadillac Three at Digbeth's O2 Institute tonight (Thu), with metal super-group The Winery Dogs at the same venue tomorrow night.

Texan rockers Bowling For Soup play Brum's O2 Academy on Saturday, Arizona metal outfit Soufly are at Wolverhampton's Slade Rooms on Sunday. Mid-80s drummer with punk legends The Ramones, Richie Ramone, has a gig at the Robin 2 in Bilston on Monday.

London rapper Loyle Carner plays the Hare And Hounds in Kings Heath on Tuesday, the same night fuzz rockers Ulrika Spacek are in the other room.

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Valentine's Day Set Menu

12th, 13th & 14th February 2016

| | | |
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| STARTERS CURED DUCK BREAST Cured duck breast served with watercress and finished with piccalilli SEARED TUNA STEAK Seared tuna steak set on a bed of buttered asparagus served with chilli & honey dressing topped with tomato salsa SOUP & SCALLOPS Homemade cauliflower & brie soup served with cauliflower puree topped with seared scallops SPINACH & GOATS CHEESE STACK Wild spinach stacked with beef tomato & oven baked goats cheese topped with crispy fried onions, served with a salsa verdi | MAIN COURSES DUO OF DUCK Confit of duck leg served with a pan-fried duck breast set on a potato rosti served with a kirsch jus-lie & black cherry coulis NOISSETTES OF LAMB Lamb served with juniper berry & redcurrant jus accompanied by minted spinach mousse BALLANTINE CHICKEN Chicken stuffed with a pistachi & sundried tomato mousse, served with a haricot bean, stock cream reduction & a beetroot coulis PAN-FRIED COD FILLET Fresh cod pan-fried served with a duo of sweet red pepper sauce & a rich hollandaise finished with crispy pancetta | CRANBERRY & WILD MUSHROOM NUT ROAST Homemade nut roast accompanied by a redcurrant & red wine jus-lie finished with fresh cranberries DESSERTS From dessert board <div> <p>3 Courses + a Glass of Prosecco</p> <p>£25.95pp</p> </div> |
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Book now to avoid disappointment

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Valentine's Day Set Menu

12th, 13th & 14th February 2016

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| STARTERS CURED DUCK BREAST Cured duck breast served with watercress and finished with piccalilli SEARED TUNA STEAK Seared tuna steak set on a bed of buttered asparagus served with chilli & honey dressing topped with tomato salsa SOUP & SCALLOPS Homemade cauliflower & brie soup served with cauliflower puree topped with seared scallops | SPINACH & GOATS CHEESE STACK Wild spinach stacked with beef tomato & oven baked goats cheese topped with crispy fried onions, served with a salsa verdi MAIN COURSES DUO OF DUCK Confit of duck leg served with a pan-fried duck breast set on a potato rosti served with a kirsch jus-lie & black cherry coulis | NOISSETTES OF LAMB Lamb served with juniper berry & redcurrant jus accompanied by minted spinach mousse BALLANTINE CHICKEN Chicken stuffed with a pistachi & sundried tomato mousse, served with a haricot bean, stock cream reduction & a beetroot coulis PAN-FRIED COD FILLET Fresh cod pan-fried served with a duo of sweet red pepper sauce & a rich hollandaise finished with crispy pancetta | CRANBERRY & WILD MUSHROOM NUT ROAST Homemade nut roast accompanied by a redcurrant & red wine jus-lie finished with fresh cranberries DESSERTS From dessert board <div> <p>3 Courses + a Glass of Prosecco</p> <p>£25.95pp</p> </div> |
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CHOICE



John Inverdale

Live Six Nations Rugby Union (BBC1, 4.30pm)
Scotland v England (Kick-off 4.50pm). John Inverdale is at Murrayfield to introduce coverage of the Calcutta Cup tie, as the rivals play their first match of this year's tournament. Scotland's record in this fixture in recent years is quite dismal, but this year they can enter the encounter with confidence following a much-improved showing at the 2015 World Cup and the undoubted progress made under coach Vern Cotter. England, in contrast, are starting over again following their early exit from that tournament, which resulted in Eddie Jones taking over as coach from Stuart Lancaster, and Jones has named an exciting, new-look squad captained by Dylan Hartley.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **10.00 Saturday Kitchen Live.** **11.30 Mary Berry's Foolproof Cooking.** (R) **12.00 BBC News; Weather.** **12.10 Football Focus.** **12.50 Saturday Sportsday.** **1.00 Bargain Hunt.** (R) **1.30 Live Six Nations Rugby Union.** France v Italy (Kick-off 2.25pm). **4.30 Live Six Nations Rugby Union.** Scotland v England (Kick-off 4.50pm). **6.55 BBC News.** **7.05 Regional Programme.** **7.15 The Voice UK.** Paloma Faith, Boy George, Will.i.am and Ricky Wilson appraise the talents of more would-be stars as the spinning-chair singing contest continues. As the fifth set of "blind auditions" gets under way, Vangelis from London performs a rendition of the Culture Club hit *Do You Really Want to Hurt Me*. The coaches also assess the talents of Mari Marli, who sings Will.i.am's own *Bang Bang*, and 19-year-old Durham busker Chloe Castro. Plus, four-time Britain's Strongest Woman winner Geirna Magnusson takes to the stage. **8.30 The National Lottery: Win Your Wish List.** New series. Shane Richie returns with the dream prize game show, giving more couples a chance to pick a selection of perfect rewards to make up their personal wish lists, all of which have a connection to their shared history together. The contest begins as Phil and Sian from Liverpool attempt to win their chosen items. Plus, Ronan Keating performs in the studio, and joins Gabby Roslin to push the button in the all-important Lotto and Thunderball draws. **9.20 Casualty.** Ethan has managed to put aside his dissatisfaction with NHS restrictions, and is back in full swing in the ED. The development comes as welcome news for Lily, and the pair join forces to help a girl with autism get the family support she desperately needs. However, just as Ethan begins to settle back down to work, it appears his world is about to be shaken to its core. **10.10 BBC News; Weather.** **10.30 Match of the Day.** Gary Lineker presents; National Lottery Update. **11.55 Race to Super Bowl 50.** **12.25 Film:** *Man of the Year*. (2006) **2.15 Weather for the Week Ahead.** **2.20 BBC News.**

BBC2

6.15 Film: *Tension at Table Rock*. (1956) **7.45 Film:** *The Red Beret*. (1953) **9.10 Animal Park.** (R) **10.10 Homes Under the Hammer.** (R) **11.10 Natural World.** (R) **12.00 James Martin: Home Comforts.** (R) **12.45 Rick Stein's India.** (R) **1.45 Holiday of My Lifetime with Len Goodman.** (R) **2.30 Escape to the Country.** (R) **3.30 Flog It!** (R) **4.30 Final Score.** **5.25 Earth's Greatest Spectacles.** (R) **6.25 Back in Time for the Weekend.** The Ashty-Hawkins family give up their 21st century technology and travel back in time to discover the radical transformation of our leisure time since 1950. Guided by presenter Giles Coren and social historian Polly Russell, the family's experience is underpinned by The Family Expenditure Survey, a government study which ran from the 1950s through to 1999. In the first episode, dad Rob finds out that he's expected to be handy with a tool kit, while mum Steph comes to terms with all the washing, cooking and cleaning expected of a 1950s housewife. Meanwhile, 16-year-old Daisy learns ballroom dancing courtesy of Angela Rippon, and 12-year-old Seth discovers the great outdoors. (R) **7.25 King George and Queen Mary: The Royals Who Rescued the Monarchy.** Part two of two. Queen Mary's rise to the throne from a comparatively low position within the royal hierarchy, after being selected for the role by Queen Victoria. (R) **8.25 Dad's Army.** Captain Mainwaring has too much to drink during a weekend course with Captain Square, but still manages to save Jonesy's life. (R) **9.00 The Real Marigold Hotel.** The group settle into life in their base in Jaipur, India, as Wayne Sleep and Bobby George have a cut-throat shave and a trip to the Taj Mahal brings Miriam Margolyes to tears. (R) **10.00 Live at the Apollo.** Romesh Ranganathan comperes an evening of stand-up at London's Hammersmith Apollo, performing himself and introducing routines by guests Jason Byrne and Stewart Francis. (R) **10.45 Insert Name Here.** (R) **11.15 Film:** *Tim*. (1979) **1.00 Film:** *My Afternoons with Marguerite*. (2010) **2.15 This Is BBC Two.**

ITV

6.00 CITV: *Fort Boyard Ultimate Challenge.* **6.25 Pat & Stan.** (R) **6.35 Dino Dan.** (R) **6.45 Dino Dan.** (R) **7.00 Signed Stories:** *Share a Story.* (R) **7.05 Sooty.** (R) **7.15 Super 4.** (R) **7.30 Scrambled!** *Scrambled!* **7.35 Scrambled! *Mr Bear: The Animated Series.* (R) **7.50 Scrambled! *Horrid Henry.* (R) **8.10 Scrambled! *Nerds & Monsters.* **8.30 Scrambled! *Jessie.* **9.05 Scrambled! *The Tom & Jerry Show.* (R) **9.25 TV News.** **9.30 Murder, She Wrote.** (R) **10.20 The Jeremy Kyle Show USA.** **11.15 The Jeremy Kyle Show.** **12.15 TV News; Weather.** **12.20 The Jeremy Kyle Show.** **1.25 Judge Rinder.** (R) **2.25 Tipping Point.** (R) **3.30 Doc Martin.** (R) **4.30 The Martin Lewis Money Show.** (R) **5.00 The Chase.** (R) **6.00 Regional Programme; Weather.** **6.15 ITV News; Weather.** **6.30 New You've Been Framed!** More comical mishaps, including a building crushing a luxury sports car and a tree that manages to topple a motorcyclist. **7.00 Ninja Warrior UK.** Ben Shephard, Rochelle Humes and Chris Kamara host the second semi-final, challenging more returning contestants to face the infamous obstacle course once again. **8.00 Take Me Out.** Paddy McGuinness provides four more potential suitors for his 30 single ladies. This time, the men braving the "love lift" are James, a commodities trader from Leeds, Leamington Spa student Ben, Manchester-based circus performer Josh and Ian, a digital developer from Portsmouth. As ever, the would-be Romeos must present themselves to female panel in the hope that they'll keep their lights on as a sign of approval. Plus, Paddy provides an update from last week's couples on the Isle of Fernandos. **9.20 The Jonathan Ross Show.** The host subjects another batch of celebrity guests to no-holds-barred questioning. Plus, musical performances by A-list bands and solo artists. **10.20 ITV News; Weather.** **10.40 Film:** *Jurassic Park III.* (2001) Action adventure sequel, starring Sam Neill, William H Macy and Tea Leoni. **12.15 Jackpot247.** **3.00 Murder, She Wrote.** (R) **3.50 ITV Nightline.************

CHANNEL 4

8.25 Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **9.00 The Morning Line.** **10.00 Frasier.** (R) **10.30 Frasier.** (R) **11.00 The Big Bang Theory.** (R) **11.30 The Big Bang Theory.** (R) **12.00 The Big Bang Theory.** (R) **12.30 Marvel's Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D.** **1.30 Channel 4 Racing.** Live coverage from Sandown Park, Ffos Las and Wetherby. **4.00 Come Dine with Me.** (R) **4.25 Come Dine with Me.** (R) **5.00 Come Dine with Me.** (R) **5.30 Come Dine with Me.** (R) **6.00 Come Dine with Me.** (R) **6.30 Channel 4 News.** **7.00 Great Canal Journeys.** Timothy West and Prunella Scales go to Ireland and travel along the Shannon Erne Waterway, a canal linking the North to the South. Along the way, they try some traditional dancing and folk singing, visit historic sites including Crom Castle and Bloody Pass, and meet a genealogist with a fascinating story to tell. Last in the series. (R) **8.00 Walking Through Time.** Palaeontologist Dr Tori Herridge investigates the natural disaster that destroyed the massive chalk land-bridge that once connected Britain to continental Europe 450,000 years ago. Beginning her inquiries in Norfolk, she discovers what life was like before the ancient mega-flood, where she meets an amateur palaeontologist who uncovered the biggest mammoth skeleton ever found, and examines the 850,000-year-old footprints of an early human family perfectly preserved in prehistoric mud. She then travels to Kent and the white cliffs of Dover to detail how the mega-flood happened, joining an "oceanographic" expedition seeking to document evidence of this cataclysm found on the bed of the English Channel. **9.00 Film: Prisoners.** (2013) Premiere. Police question a man in relation to the disappearance of two children, but can find no evidence of wrongdoing. However, the distraught father of one of the missing youngsters is not convinced of his innocence, and kidnaps the suspect to force him into a confession. Thriller, starring Hugh Jackman. **12.00 Film:** *Friday the 13th.* (2009) **1.45 Hollyoaks.** (R) **3.55 Undercover Boss Canada.** (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake! **8.55 Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles.** (R) **9.30 The Saturday Show.** **11.35 Funnies Falls, Falls & Flops.** (R) **12.00 Police Interceptors.** (R) **1.00 Police Interceptors.** (R) **2.00 Now That's Funny!** (R) **3.00 Benefits, Babies & Jail.** (R) **4.00 Benefits, Babies & Jail.** (R) **5.00 Benefits: 19 Kids and Counting the Cost.** (R) **6.00 Celebs on Benefits: Fame to Claim.** Documentary following former Corrie star Bruce Jones (Les Battersby) and one-time Big Brother contestant Lisa Appleton, who have gone from signing autographs to signing on the dole. (R) **6.55 5 News Weekend.** **7.00 World War II in Colour.** Examining Mussolini's decision to push Italy's forces into North Africa, and looking at the air and sea battles for control of the strategically vital Mediterranean island of Malta. (R) **8.00 America's Hidden Pyramid City: Ancient Mysteries.** A team of experts uses cutting-edge technology to examine the history of an ancient Native American civilisation that built a metropolis in what is now Illinois. (R) **9.00 The Championship: Football League Tonight.** Kelly Cates and George Riley present extended highlights of the weekend's top matches from the Championship, which included Burnley v Hull City and Middlesbrough v Blackburn Rovers. **10.00 Goal Rush: Football League Tonight.** Kelly Cates and George Riley present a round-up of all the goals and talking points from League One and League Two, as well as a look at the latest league tables. **10.30 Law & Order: Special Victims Unit.** The detectives are forced to rely on an officer from another district when a rape victim refuses to talk to anyone but him, while introductions to the new ADA go badly. (R) **11.25 Law & Order: Special Victims Unit.** An ex-financier is questioned about the murder of his girlfriend – but the focus of the investigation gradually shifts to the CEO of a dating website. (R) **12.15 SuperCasino.** **3.10 Celebrity Botched Up Bodies.** (R) **4.00 Celebrity Big Brother: The Good, the Bad and the Outrageous.** (R) **5.00 House Doctor.** (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Three **7.00 Great Movie Mistakes III:** Not in 3D **7.05 Don't Tell the Bride** **8.05 Top Gear Vietnam Special** **9.20 Film:** *Meet the Parents* (2000) **11.05 Russell Howard's Good News** **11.30 Family Guy** **1.00 Russell Howard's Good News** **1.30 Siblings** **2.00 The Revolution Will Be Televised** **3.00 Far Right and Proud:** Reggie Yates' Extreme Russia **4.00 Close BBC Four** **7.00 How Earth Made Us** **8.00 Shipwrecks:** Britain's Sunken History **9.00 The Young Montalbano** **10.45 Annabel's Nightclub: A String of Naked Lightbulbs** **11.45 Je t'aime: The Story of French Song with Petula Clark** **12.45 Shirley Bassey at the BBC** **1.45 Top of the Pops: 1981** **3.10 Sounds of the Eighties** **3.55 Close ITV3** **11.10 Ninja Warrior UK** **12.10 Scorpion** **1.05 You've Been Framed!** *Gold Full Throttle* **2.10 Film:** *Mr Bean's Holiday* (2007) **4.00 Film:** *Beethoven* (1992) **5.50 Celebrity Catchphrase** **6.50 Film:** *The Mummy Returns* (2001) **9.20 Take Me Out – The Gossip** **10.20 The Keith Lemon Christmas** **10.50 Film:** *Sweeney Todd: The Demon Barber of Fleet Street* (2008) **1.10 Beowulf: Return to the Shieldlands** **2.10 Reality Bites** **2.45 Teleshopping** **5.45 ITV2 Nightscreen** **ITV3** **1.50 The Return of Sherlock Holmes** **4.00 Film:** *Columbo: It's All in the Game* (1993) **6.05 Midsomer Murders** **10.00 Agatha Christie's Marple** **12.05 Blue Murder** **1.40 Man About the House** **2.05 ITV3 Nightscreen** **2.30 Teleshopping** **ITV4** **1.35 Film:** *No Name on the Bullet* (1959) **3.10 Film:** *Dunkirk* (1958) **6.00 Live FIA Formula E Championship. The Buenos Aires ePrix. **8.30 Storage Wars** **9.00 Film:** *Escape from New York* (1981) **11.05 Film:** *The Return* (2006) **12.50 Film:** *Red Heat* (1988) **2.50 ITV4 Nightscreen** **3.00 Teleshopping** **Eurosport** **3.05 The Goldbergs** **4.00 Brooklyn Nine-Nine** **5.00 The Big Bang Theory** **9.00 Film:** *Bridesmaids* (2011) **11.30 Gogglebox** **1.35 Virtually Famous** **2.20 The Inbetweeners** **3.15 The IT Crowd** **4.05 2 Broke Girls** **4.30 Rules of Engagement** **5.15 Revenge Film4** **11.00 California Man (1992) **1.00 Horton Hears a Who! (2008) **2.40 Chocolat (2000) **5.00 City of Ember (2008) **6.45 Shallow Hal (2001) **9.00 Salt (2010) **10.55 ATM (2012)****************

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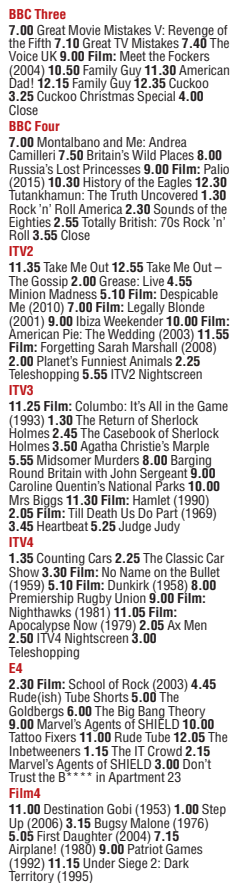
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FILM CHOICES

MONDAY

Hannibal, Channel 5, 10.55pm
Fugitive serial killer Dr Hannibal Lecter has gone into hiding as an academic in Italy, but a disfigured victim is determined to find him and inflict a gruesome revenge. Ridley Scott's thriller sequel, starring Anthony Hopkins, Julianne Moore and Ray Liotta. (2001)

TUESDAY

A Surrogate's Terror, Channel 5, 3.15pm
A college student agrees to be a surrogate mother for a wealthy couple in return for her tuition fees being paid, only for the prospective parents to die in a car crash. Drama, starring Cassie Steele. (2014)

WEDNESDAY

Michael Clayton, BBC1, 11.45pm
A troubled attorney takes over a high-profile case when a colleague suffers a nervous breakdown and threatens to blow the whistle on corporate corruption. However, as he tries to limit the damage, he uncovers damning proof that will expose a secret group of conspirators – who are prepared to commit murder to keep the evidence buried. Legal thriller, starring George Clooney and Tom Wilkinson. (2007)



Michael Clayton, Wednesday, BBC1, 11.45pm

THURSDAY

Guilty at 17, Channel 5, 3.15pm
A teenager believes her friend when she lies about being sexually harassed by a teacher, and falsely claims to have witnessed an incident. When the accused teacher commits suicide, she is consumed with guilt and begins to suspect she has been deceived. Crime drama, starring Erin Sanders and Alex Paxton-Beesley. (2014)

FRIDAY

Evil Under the Sun, ITV, 11.15pm
Hercule Poirot braves the heat and sand to investigate the murder of a glamorous stage star on an idyllic Adriatic holiday island. It becomes clear many people had reason to want the temperamental actress dead and the Belgian sleuth is soon hard at work figuring out which of her enemies eventually managed to kill her. Mystery, with Peter Ustinov, Diana Rigg, James Mason, Maggie Smith and Jane Birkin. (1982)

Mulder and Scully are reopening their files

It could be a case for Mulder and Scully – whatever happened to the top-rated sci-fi series and its characters when it went off air for 14 years? Thankfully, we're about to find out because The X-Files is back.

Even the most die-hard of fans (and let's face it, there were plenty of those around during the show's original run, from 1993 to 2002) never thought they'd get to see their heroes in action again, and have been almost beside themselves with glee at the prospect since the reboot was announced.

Not that bringing back much-loved cult series is a rarity these days. Doctor Who made a triumphant return, nine years after he last featured in the lacklustre 1996 film, while Twin Peaks is set to appear on our screens in 2017 following a 26-year hiatus.

Both David Duchovny and Gillian Anderson have agreed to reprise their roles as FBI agents Fox Mulder and Dana Scully – it just wouldn't have been the same without them.

Both stars have enjoyed success in various projects following the end of

the original series, with Anderson particularly familiar to UK viewers thanks to her appearance on TV in the likes of The Fall, Great Expectations, The Crimson Petal and the White, and the recent adaptation of War and Peace.

They will be joined by various other original run alumni, including Mitch Pileggi as the FBI's assistance director Walter Skinner, and William B Davis, who plays the enigmatic Smoking Man.

What surprised many is that Channel 5 outbid other broadcasters to grab the right to show the six-part run. "Securing the UK premiere of the hugely anticipated return of The X-Files is a major coup for the channel and will create one of the television events of 2016," said Ben Frow, director of programmes at Channel 5. "This acquisition underlines our ambition to deliver a diverse slate of brilliant, must-see programming on Channel 5."

So far, feedback has been very good. Okay, so some critics have been unkind, but fans – and they are the ones who are important here –

have given it an overwhelming thumbs-up.

What's more, the first episode features a recap that will be invaluable to casual viewers, or those who didn't watch the original run or either of its spin-off movies. After that, it's the monster-of-the-week approach that takes centre stage as Mulder and Scully get to grips with more intrigue and conspiracy.

When we meet them again, the duo have been living separate lives for years – she at a medical practice, him ploughing his own furrow. They are brought back together by a cable TV host who wants them to help him expose a sinister organisation he believes has the power to control the American public.

Channel 5 is also broadcasting The X-Files: Reopened immediately before the first edition, enabling fans to see behind-the-scenes footage of Duchovny and Anderson in action with the show's creator, Chris Carter.

Will the programme's return whet our appetite for more? Probably – the question is, will it ever be sated?



Gillian Anderson and David Duchovny star in The X-Files, Monday, Channel 5, 9pm

BEST OF THE REST

MONDAY

Mary Berry's Foolproof Cooking BBC2, 8.30pm

The Great British Bake Off judge prepares a selection of dishes perfect for outdoor entertaining and lazy summer days, beginning with a whole seabass with lime and dill butter. Mary then meets experts Jules and Nick to have a go at catching crayfish in the waters of Oxfordshire, before using the crustaceans in an oriental vegetable salad. She then demonstrates simple recipes for lamb burgers with mint mayo, and smoked Texan chicken wings, and finishes with refreshing lemon and elderflower jellies.

Royal Navy Sailor School Channel 4, 9pm

New series. Documentary following two classes of new Royal Navy recruits as they start their training at HMS Raleigh in Torpoint, Cornwall. In the first episode, a fresh intake arrives at HMS Raleigh to begin 10 weeks of training, the first two of which can make or break their career. Exhaustion and homesickness leave teenager Harland questioning if this life is really for him, while the eldest member Craig Rowan (32) sees this as his last chance to make something of himself and his instructors think he might be leadership material.

TUESDAY

Back in Time for the Weekend BBC2, 8pm

The Ashby-Hawkins family sample life in the 1960s and with more money to go around, there's more fun to be had, including a trip to the seaside, a Dansette record player for 16-year-old Daisy and even their own Mini to enjoy. Dad Rob and son Seth take on football legend Trevor Brooking for a game of Subbuteo, and Daisy and mum Steph meet Sandie Shaw to discover how the decade's daring fashions reflected the growing freedoms.

Happy Valley BBC1, 9pm

The last time we saw Sgt Catherine Cawood, she was feeling pretty good about catching her nemesis, Tommy Lee Royce, the man she holds responsible for her daughter's suicide. You would think, then, that she would be cheerier when we catch up with her again, almost two years later. However, Catherine is the sort of woman who carries the world on her shoulders – besides which, she's about to make a very grisly discovery, one that makes her colleagues wonder if a serial killer is on the loose.



Happy Valley, Tuesday, BBC1, 9pm

WEDNESDAY

The Great Sport Relief Bake Off BBC1, 8pm

Ed Byrne takes on the role of host as ex-Spice Girl Geri Horner, BBC World Affairs editor John Simpson, footballer and pundit Jermaine Jenas and 90s pop star Louise Redknapp face three baking-related tasks set by judges Paul Hollywood and Mary Berry. For the signature challenge, they must make savoury tarts, before taking on Mary's chocolate and beetroot tray bake in the technical. Finally, the celebrities must use their imagination as they attempt to create 3D models of their favourite sporting moments using biscuits.

THURSDAY

Jericho ITV, 9pm

Charles arranges for stone to be quarried from a nearby site, and panic sets in for Annie and Johnny when they

discover it is where the bodies of Happy Jack and Red are buried. The townsfolk are outraged at the thought of their old foreman's body being moved and rally round his widow Hatty, but she is won over by the promise of a decent headstone for his new grave, so Johnny takes charge of the exhumation, hoping he can prevent Red's body being discovered. Meanwhile, Isabella tells Charles she wants to be his wife in every sense, but when housemaid Epiphany lets something slip about her past, no one is prepared for the consequences.

FRIDAY Mr Selfridge ITV, 9pm

Reeling from the bad publicity after the assault on the store, Harry finds himself forced to admit the true state of his financial affairs when Dancona piles on more pressure, and later finds himself embroiled in a costly spat with media magnate Lord Wynnstay. Mr Grove and Miss Mardle plan their very special forthcoming event, and Meryl enlists Tilly's help for a very important task – fuelling Miss Ellis' ire in the process. Mae and Victor grow closer, leaving Jimmy to become increasingly jealous. Drama, starring Jeremy Piven, Katherine Kelly, Amanda Abbington and Tom Goodman-Hill.

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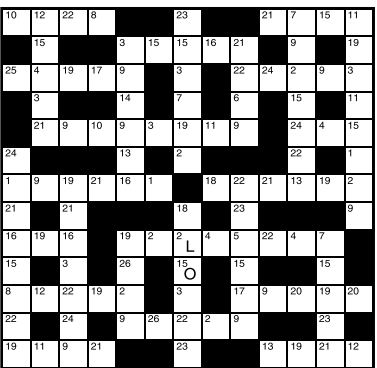
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Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



| | |
|----|----|
| 1 | 14 |
| 2 | 15 |
| 3 | 16 |
| 4 | 17 |
| 5 | 18 |
| 6 | 19 |
| 7 | 20 |
| 8 | 21 |
| 9 | 22 |
| 10 | 23 |
| 11 | 24 |
| 12 | 25 |
| 13 | 26 |

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| O | C | Z | T | V | N | P | U | D | Y | E | G | M |
| X | Q | I | L | A | F | K | J | W | B | R | S | H |

Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.

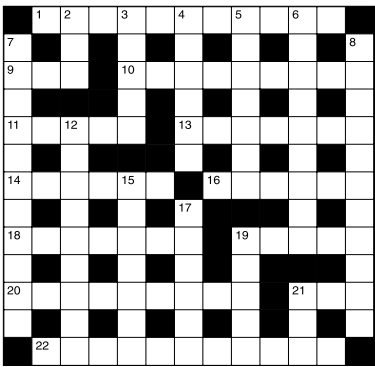
Cryptic Clues:

Across

- 1. They show you what you can get with money (4-7)
- 9. She's always cut short (3)
- 10. The local newspaper made him redundant (4-5)
- 11. Silas is out to be of use to a ropemaker (5)
- 13. One object in rent is investment (7)
- 14. Their function is to secure quiet in class (6)
- 16. Government upsets the emigre (6)
- 18. Number return with piece of writing for broadcasting? (7)
- 19. Horse stepped very softly out (5)
- 20. Scramble at the pig's food (9)
- 21. A tie in an archery contest? (3)
- 22. Get straight an argument with privileges (3,2,6)

Down

- 2. Weed-killer (3)
- 3. Floral plate design (5)
- 4. In part of a hospital - mental, perhaps (6)
- 5. Refuse to go through all the cases? (7)
- 6. One result of juicy pickings (5,4)
- 7. A deep malady (3-8)
- 8. Put on to paper, Chinese style? (7,4)
- 12. Hardly the speed at which a tramp will walk! (5,4)
- 15. He foresees a hold-up over the reform (7)
- 17. He might make a streak on the ice (6)
- 19. A weapon attached to a rifle, perhaps (5)
- 21. Part - of the bride? (3)



Quick Clues:

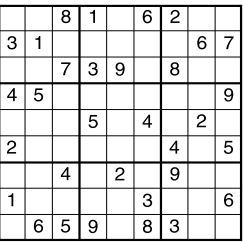
Across

- 1. Golden mean (5,6)
- 9. Wand (3)
- 10. Gazette (9)
- 11. Horrify (5)
- 13. Shyness (7)
- 14. Regular (6)
- 16. Fasten (6)
- 18. Personal (7)
- 19. Broaden (5)
- 20. Get rid of (9)
- 21. Unity (3)
- 22. Enterprise (11)

Down

- 2. Help (3)
- 3. Punitive (5)
- 4. Grass-cutters (6)
- 5. Put (7)
- 6. Advantage (5,4)
- 7. Sister's grandson (5-6)
- 8. Septic (11)
- 12. Utter ruin (9)
- 15. Greed (7)
- 17. Leave (6)
- 19. Destroy (5)
- 21. Possess (3)

Sudoku



Fill in the grid below so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS >

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4 | 1 | 5 | 8 | 2 | 3 | 6 | 7 | 9 |
| 6 | 3 | 9 | 4 | 7 | 1 | 8 | 5 | 2 |
| 2 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 5 | 6 | 4 | 1 | 3 |
| 1 | 9 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 5 |
| 8 | 5 | 2 | 6 | 3 | 9 | 7 | 4 | 1 |
| 3 | 4 | 7 | 6 | 1 | 2 | 9 | 6 | 8 |
| 7 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 6 | 8 | 5 | 9 | 4 |
| 9 | 6 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 5 | 3 | 8 | 7 |
| 5 | 8 | 4 | 3 | 9 | 7 | 1 | 2 | 6 |

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS: CRYPTIC - Across: 1 Back; 3 Theatres; 9 Adorned; 10 Quote; 11 Discountable; 13 Strive; 15 Unson; 17 Counteragent; 20 Olive; 21 Accused; 22 Eighteen; 23 Play. Down: 1 Brandish; 2 Cross; 4 Hiding; 5 Acquaintance; 6 Rootless; 7 Slew; 8 Inconvenient; 12 Unitedly; 14 Roofing; 16 Menace; 18 Ease; 19 Bore. QUICK - Across: 1 Pick; 3 Sorcerer; 9 Ordinal; 10 Nasal; 11 In the interim; 13 Impale; 15 Speech; 17 Congratulate; 20 Ashen; 21 Founded; 22 Fatherly; 23 Reed. Down: 1 Prolific; 2 Cadet; 4 Oblong; 5 Contemptuous; 6 Respite; 7 Rule; 8 Intelligence; 12 Shielded; 14 Prophet; 16 Lawful; 18 Addie; 19 Wait.

Quiz

- 1. In which country is the state of Uttar Pradesh?
- 2. Who directed the film Jules et Jim?
- 3. What sort of animal is a tarpon?
- 4. What nationality is the avant-garde composer Karlheinz Stockhausen?
- 5. Which physicist discovered alpha, beta and gamma rays?
- 6. What is the capital of Haiti?
- 7. Which king constructed the Hanging Gardens of Babylon?
- 8. In which century did the poet John Milton live?
- 9. What is the symbol used for the element magnesium?
- 10. In which year did the actor Steve McQueen die?

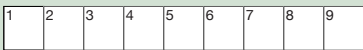
Last week's solutions:

- Quiz: 1 Thermos; 2 The Marshall Plan; 3 Tennessee; 4 Actress; 5 The helmet; 6 Mace; 7 Telescope; 8 Miles Davis; 9 Kurt Waldheim; 10 1856.
- Niner: INCURABLE

Niner

Each number from 1 to 9 represents a different letter. Solve the clues and insert the letters in the appropriate squares to discover a word which uses all nine letters.

- 1225 gives an animal,
- 324 gives a vegetable,
- 9548762 gives a mineral.



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|---|--|---|
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Beef it up – linguine al brasato



Restaurant in a canalside setting



Light and space – The interior of Fiume is bright and breezy



Tempting tower – pollo saltimbocca

Forget new flavour of Pringles this is something to really get excited about

I GET excited very easily. I get excited when a new flavour of Pringles is unveiled

But when I found out that there is an Italian restaurant within walking distance of my flat – a long walk, admittedly – I got very excited. Taxi, take me to Fiume!

Fiume is in a lovely little spot. A canal-side restaurant in Compton spread over two floors. It's clean, bright, in a location that cries out for summer lunches in the sun, and staffed by an attentive team who make a fuss of you as soon as you arrive.

Your meal is soundtrack by a mixture of opera and mambo, set at a volume that does not intrude but instead actually rather soothes. So all we need now is some decent nosh and it is, as the saying goes, all gravy. Not literally all gravy, that would be a bit boring.

I must confess that I had decided that I

Pete Cashmore tucks in

liked Fiume even before I arrived. I absolutely adore Italian grub at any time, I'd live on it if I could, and when you have two of my favourite things – seafood and calzone pizzas – combined and thrown into the mix, then really, you're onto a winner.

Portions

Even better, they do something that I love in my Italians – they offer starter-sized portions of pasta to get the ball rolling, meaning you can, in theory, do pasta and pizza together and still come away not feeling like the Goodyear airship.

So that is what I resolved to do, for the diddy-sized (although there was nothing especially diddy about it) spaghetti carbonara, and then that calzone. Elsewhere in the table, my fellow diners, codenames 'Mum'

and 'Dad', went for crespella di funghi, Italian crepe stuffed with mushrooms, followed by pollo saltimbocca, chicken wrapped in parma ham with mash, and calamari followed by linguine with a duck ragu, respectively.

I'm not one for competitive eating, but I like to think that I 'won' this meal. It really was a rip-snorter. Spaghetti carbonara is a dish that can often go wrong – it can be too creamy, it can be too eggy, it can contain ropey ham, all factors which can ruin what should be an indulgent dish.

No such worries at Fiume. Chunky pancetta, tart parmesan, just the right amount of creaminess and egginess.

The calzone did exactly what I expected of it. I believe I spotted prawn, squid and octopus in there. It was terrific fun to wrestle with. Elsewhere on the table my father pronounced himself thrilled with the calamari,

which came in a monster portion of great big rubbery rings and looked great, but seemed merely satisfied with his pasta – I didn't grill him on it excessively because he took about half an hour to polish it off and to ask him to talk would have exacerbated this process.

Delightful

Mother, meanwhile, seemed more than happy with both starter and main. A couple of coffees for the parents while I polished off another bottle of beer, and an entirely delightful eat-up was in the bag for £74, which is not too shabby.

Fiume really have got everything right – the attractive location, the attention levels of the staff, which is warm and just the right amount of fussy, and a menu that offers a wide choice.

I'd go back there in a heartbeat.

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*SOURCE: JICREG 01.04.2014

An Express & Star supplement

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YOUR WEEKLY GUIDE TO HOME BUYING AND LETTING



Problems faced by the buyer and seller



Bad communication – either not calling enough, or chasing too much: 21 per cent
Buyer or seller felt as if the agent didn't care about them: 14 per cent
Not being informed about known property faults, e.g. – structural issues, damp, etc: 13 per cent
Making promises they could not keep: 11 per cent
Being too pressurising: 10 per cent
Over exaggerating a property description: 10 per cent
Over pricing a property that a buyer is interested in: nine per cent
Feeling as if the agent was dishonest: nine per cent
The agent not having all the information the buyer or seller needed e.g. service charges, council tax: eight per cent
Not being able to contact the agent: eight per cent
Not putting the right offers to vendors: six per cent
Agents forgetting who the buyer or seller was (too many buyers or sellers on the agents' books at one time): six per cent

Estate agents you can trust

FOR most of us buying or selling a home is the most expensive – and stressful – thing we will ever do.

Some research has even found people claiming it was more painful that being made redundant, getting divorced or even going bankrupt.

So it is absolutely vital to make the right choice when deciding whether to use a traditional estate agent, an online house selling website, one of the new 'hybrid' agents or even just going it alone.

And if you decide to use an estate agent, it is equally vital to make sure you choose the right one for you.

The best way to be reassured that you are putting yourself in good hands is to look out for the NAEA logo.

The National Association of Estate Agents is the UK's leading professional body for estate agency personnel, being part of a group representing 13,000 members who practice across all aspects of property services both in the UK and overseas.

These include residential and commercial sales and lettings, property management, business transfer, auctioneering and land. The NAEA is also a sister organisation to the Association of Residential Letting Agents (ARLA).

NAEA is dedicated to the goal of professionalism within all aspects of property, estate agency and land. Its aim is to reassure the general public that by appointing an NAEA member to represent them they will receive in return the highest level of integrity and service for all property matters. Both NAEA and ARLA



members are bound by a vigorously enforced Code of Practice and adhere to professional Rules of Conduct. Failure to do so can result in heavy financial penalties and possible expulsion from the associations.

With house prices back on the up, largely because demand for homes currently far outweighs the supply, the property market has become even more of a minefield than in previous years.

Mark Hayward, managing director at the National Association of Estate Agents, says: "In such a lively market, it's important that agents are delivering exceptional standards of service.

"Consumers need to ensure that they are looking for the NAEA logo in estate agents' windows, doors and on websites. NAEA agents integrate high quality and best practice services in to everything they do.

"They are regulated and adhere to a strict code of practice. Whilst problems can and do arise during the process of buying or selling a home, using a NAEA agent will put consumers' minds at ease that any issues can be dealt with in a professional and safe manner."

Research carried out by the association for its Look for the Logo campaign found nearly two thirds – 60 per cent – of home buyers and

sellers had faced problems with their estate agents over the last five years, but 39 per cent had not considered whether their agents were regulated or not. That meant their agent might not have been signed up to a code of conduct or have any regulatory body over seeing them. More than a third of those taking part in the survey (37 per cent) admitted that their problems could have been avoided if their agent was better regulated.

The biggest complaint from the UK's property market was the fact that their estate agent had bad communication skills – either not calling them back, or chasing them too much (21 per cent). A further one in seven (14 per cent) felt as though their agent didn't care about them. An additional 13 per cent claimed that their estate agent had not told them about known faults in properties they were looking at.

Mark Hayward said: "Buying a property is the biggest purchase and financial commitment of your life, and can be an overwhelming experience. It takes a lot of hard work and research to ensure you are ticking all the right boxes, and no doubt people come across many challenges along the way. An estate agent should really be there to help this process, not hinder, and therefore the choice of which agent to go with is an important one.

"With the extensive administrative tasks and processes involved in buying or selling a home, communication between agents and homeowners is essential. It's the estate agents' role to make these processes seem as pain-free and seamless as possible, which regulated agents endeavour to do."

She's sold

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If you are thinking of selling, look no further than the estate agents in these pages for the best local advice available.



This traditional detached house has a prime location



A TRADITIONAL detached family home in a prime residential location in Hagley Road, Halesowen, comes with a very large driveway and a double garage. It is for sale through Hicks Hadley at £300,000.

With double glazing and gas central heating it has an entrance hall with a stained glass port hole window and original Minton tiled flooring and stairs off and under-stairs storage, a WC, a large dining room with a period-style fire place and stripped wooden flooring, a breakfast room/study/family room with laminate-style flooring, a kitchen with a comprehensive range of units, an oven with a six-ring gas hob and extractor, integrated fridge and a door to the garden, a superb lounge with French doors to the rear garden and a feature fireplace. There is a master bedroom, bedroom two with wardrobes and wooden flooring, bedroom three and a re-fitted bathroom.

Two front garden comprises lawn with borders and mature trees. The superb rear garden has spacious patio area, timber garden shed and a covered hot tub is included in the sale.

Contact 0121 5856667 or visit www.hickshadley.com



Four-bedroom home has farmland views

A WELL-proportioned four-bedroom detached residence, 26 Bridgnorth Road, Wombourne, has farmland views to the front of the property.

It is for sale through £279,950.

With double glazing and gas central heating, the house has a well proportioned lounge with large window to the front and flame-effect gas fire, dining room with door opening to the garden, separate sitting room/study, and breakfast kitchen.

There are three double bedrooms plus a single bedroom and a family bathroom.

There is a rear garden with patio, lawn and timber decking.

For further information contact Berriman Eaton at 01902 326366 or visit the website www.berrimaneaton.co.uk



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Stone, Kidderminster. DY10 4PJ



Galahad Way Stourport DY13 8SQ



TWO high quality 1950's former Police Houses on a large south facing plot in an acutely sought-after location off Moorhall Drive - the properties currently inter-connect, reflecting their most recent use as a Charity Day Centre, but would revert to their original forms very easily indeed. Immense further potential, vacant possession upon completion - Freehold. Energy Rating: D

Guide Price £250,000-£300,000

Stanford Bridge Nr Abberley WR6 6SX



OPEN VIEWING SATURDAY 6 FEB. 10am-12noon

A Prime Development Opportunity with grandstand valley views. A sizeable detached stable with FULL Planning Permission for conversion. The scheme was approved by Malvern Hills District Council on 30 April, 2014 under application number 14/00236/FUL and provides for a substantial single storey layout offering a gross internal area of 100sqm or 1,076 sq.ft. Externally there is also plenty of amenity and ample parking provision. Worcester & Ludlow each about 15 miles distant. Freehold.

Guide Price £125,000-£175,000

Farm Road Stourport DY13 9DQ



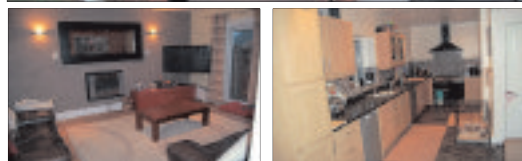
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TWO PURPOSE BUILT MODERN FLATS built approximately 12 years ago - the properties are to be sold together as one freehold lot and have been producing an attractive combined gross rental income of £10,800 per annum. 43A will have the benefit of vacant possession and 43B is currently let at £500 per calendar month. 43A - a one-bedroom ground floor garden flat. 43B - a two-bedroom duplex flat with garden plus fine rear views over the Stour Valley. Energy Ratings: No. 43a: D / No. 43b: C

Guide Price £100,000-£120,000

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OAKFIELD AVENUE KINGSWINFORD

An Impressive four bedroom detached property with accommodation to comprise of : Entrance hall, lounge, dining room, breakfast kitchen, rear lobby, downstairs WC, four bedrooms, Master with en-suite, bathroom and garage/utility. The property further boasts Gas central heating, double glazing, hot tub, sauna, front and rear gardens and sweeping block paved driveway affording off road parking.

UNFURNISHED EPC RATING = D DSS: NO CHILDREN: YES PETS: NO SMOKERS: NO
£1150 DEPOSIT £1250 • FEES

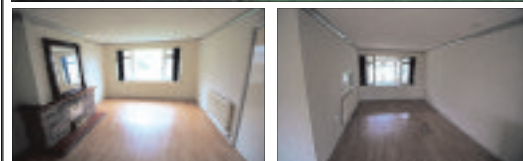


COLUMBUS AVENUE MERRY HILL

A three bedroom semi detached property occupying a quiet cul-de-sac location with accommodation to comprise of: Entrance hall, lounge, kitchen, three bedrooms and family bathroom. The property further benefits from having gas central heating, double glazing, enclosed rear garden, fore garden, carport and garage.

UNFURNISHED EPC RATING = E DSS: NO CHILDREN: YES PETS: NO SMOKERS: NO

£575PCM DEPOSIT £675 • FEES

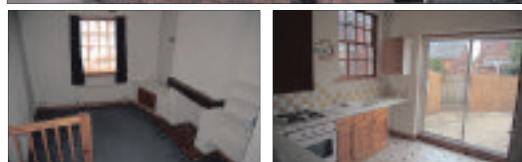


VANBOROUGH WALK DUDLEY

A three bedroom semi detached property occupying a quiet cul-de-sac location with accommodation to comprise of: Entrance hall, lounge, kitchen, three bedrooms and family bathroom. The property further benefits from having gas central heating, double glazing, enclosed rear garden, fore garden, carport and garage.

UNFURNISHED EPC RATING = E DSS: NO CHILDREN: YES PETS: NO SMOKERS: NO

£550PCM DEPOSIT £650 • FEES



HIGH STREET WORDSLEY

A well presented Two Bedroom Semi-Detached property in the heart of Wordsley. Accommodation comprises of Lounge, fitted Kitchen, Two Bedrooms, Bathroom, The property further benefits from Gas Central Heating, Double Glazing, Enclosed rear Garden and newly gravelled Off Road Parking Area, immediately behind property.

Viewing is highly recommended. UNFURNISHED EPC RATING = D
DSS:NO PETS: MAY CONSIDER CHILDREN:YES SMOKERS:NO

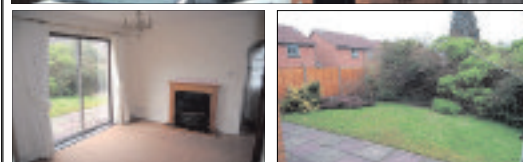
£510PCM DEPOSIT £610 • FEES



KETLEY ROAD KINGSWINFORD

A well presented three bedroom semi detached property situated in a popular residential location with accommodation to comprise of: Entrance hall, Lounge/Diner, Kitchen/Diner, three bedrooms and bathroom. The property also benefits from having double glazing, gas central heating, rear large L shaped enclosed garden, lawned foregarden and private driveway affording off road parking. UNFURNISHED EPC RATING = D DSS: NO CHILDREN: YES PETS: NO SMOKERS: NO

£650PCM DEPOSIT £750 • FEES



UPPER ASHLEY STREET HALESOWEN

A one bedroom starter home situated in a quiet residential location with accommodation to comprise of: Entrance Hall, lounge, fitted kitchen, double bedroom and bathroom. The property further benefits from partial gas central heating, driveway affording off road parking and enclosed side garden with patio area and storage shed. PART FURNISHED EPC RATING = D DSS: NO CHILDREN: NO PETS: NO SMOKERS: NO

£440PCM DEPOSIT £540 • FEES



CLARENCE STREET UPPER GORNAL

A two bedroom terrace property situated in a popular residential location. Accommodation comprises of Lounge, kitchen, downstairs WC, two bedrooms and bathroom. The property further benefits from gas central heating, double glazing, allocated parking and small enclosed garden. UNFURNISHED EPC RATING = C DSS:MAY CONSIDER CHILDREN:YES PETS:NO SMOKERS:NO

£525 DEPOSIT £625 • FEES



ALBERT STREET LYE

A well presented three bedroom mid terrace property situated in a popular residential location with accommodation to comprise of: Lounge, inner hall, dining room, fitted kitchen, utility, three bedrooms and bathroom. The property further boasts gas central heating, double glazing, rear garden with patio area and lawn and shared entry to the front. UNFURNISHED EPC RATING = E DSS: NO CHILDREN: YES PETS: MAY CONSIDER SMOKERS: NO

£525PCM DEPOSIT £625 • FEES



KINGS MEWS WOLLASTON

A brand new one bedroom ground floor apartment within walking distance of Wollaston Village. The accommodation comprises of: Communal entrance hall with entry phone system, private entrance hall, spacious open plan lounge/kitchen, bedroom and bathroom. The property further benefits from having double glazing, electric heating, paved patio area the fore and off road parking. UNFURNISHED EPC RATING = C DSS: NO CHILDREN: NO PETS: NO SMOKERS: NO

£475.00PCM DEPOSIT £575 • FEES



DADFORD VIEW BRIERLEY HILL

A two bedroom first floor Apartment situated in a popular residential location with accommodation to comprise of: Communal entrance with staircase to first floor, private entrance hall with store cupboard, lounge, kitchen, two bedrooms and bathroom. The property further benefits from having electric heating, allocated off road parking and bin store. UNFURNISHED EPC RATING = D DSS: NO CHILDREN: YES PETS: NO SMOKERS: NO

£395PCM DEPOSIT £495 • FEES

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TAMAR RISE AMBLECOTE

A well presented one bedroom first floor Apartment situated in a popular residential location with accommodation to comprise of: Reception hall, lounge, kitchen, bedroom and built in shower room. The property also benefits from double glazing, electric heating and off road parking to the fore and brick built bin store. UNFURNISHED EPC RATING = D DSS: NO CHILDREN: NO PETS: NO SMOKERS: NO

£370PCM DEPOSIT £470 • FEES

Adventure with Avenis

By Sharon Walters

Car manufacturers make a fairly big song and dance of claiming how they take notice of what buyers of their cars want when they upgrade. They canvass brand loyalty customers and trumpet their findings. And generally they do incorporate major concerns which they see as an improvement to their products – obviously taking into account cost.

Toyota go one further and not only talk to buyers who have crossed the threshold of their showrooms but also drivers of other cars as well. The Japanese firm did this with the latest Avenis and appear to have listened well and used the information to make what was a good product even better.

And what is good news for the UK is the car is made at Toyota's long-established plant near Derby – as have more than 1,711 Avenis across four generations that have appeared on European roads since the original was launched in late 1997. Plus the car was designed and engineered at Toyota's European development centre. Japanese by name but not by nature.

This latest version saw a new style, new engines and some pretty innovative technology. Toyota has always been known for quality, durability and reliability and that has been continued and further improved upon.

Avenis has appealed to both private and the fleet/business market but the latter has always taken the lion's share.

Both revealed they wanted prestige, luxury and elegance and they have certainly got

it. Saloon and tourer were targeted with five main areas of improvement:

- Styling
- Sensory quality and comfort
- Safety
- Equipment and value for money
- Driving pleasure and running costs

Avenis has two diesel engines at the heart of its range: a 1.6 unit and a 2.0-litre. I drove the 2.0 litre Tourer which, if you are a business user, produces 124g/km giving an initial 22 per cent BIK rate.

You also get more than 68mpg in an extra urban driving cycle according to claimed figures by Toyota. I didn't quite achieve that. But on one of my regular visits north of the border I did get fairly close. Not to be sniffed at in a 408 mile journey combining motorways (and hold-ups), city and rural driving. It positively soaked up the motorway driving with little cabin noise intrusion and a smooth ride, as indeed it was on the winding country roads.

Quality

Inside the cabin is well laid out and high quality with very comfortable seats and an excellent smart driver's information display and media system.

I know some people sneer at this but there are also plenty of cubbyholes and decent sized glovebox – I despair at some of the totally useless 'slots' left in some cars. Better to do away with the glovebox altogether. And joy of joys, a space saver tyre!

Active and Excel grades mark the entry point and top of the range with Business Edition and Business Edition Plus versions at the heart of the line-up. Across the board, specifications secure high levels of safety, comfort and convenience, not least with the standard provision of Toyota Safety Sense integrated active safety features on all models.



Key features of the Active grade include Pre-Crash Safety system with Autonomous Emergency Braking, cruise control, air conditioning, six-speaker CD/radio audio, Bluetooth, auto-dimming rear-view mirror, LED rear and daytime running lights and power windows.

Business Edition adds to this strong foundation with the Toyota Touch 2 with Go touch-screen multimedia and navigation system, digital/DAB audio package with eight-inch display, reversing camera, front fog lights, rain-sensing wipers, dusk-sensing headlights, automatic air conditioning, 17-inch alloy wheels and part-Al-

cantara seat upholstery. The active safety features extend to Automatic High Beam, Lane Departure Warning and Road Sign Assist.

Business Edition Plus delivers further premium features including leather upholstery with Alcantara inserts, front fog lights with a cornering function, LED headlamps, smart entry and rear privacy glass. The LED daytime running lights gain light guides, creating a distinctive lighting signature.

At the top of the range, Excel grade adopts Toyota Touch 2 with Go Plus, adding more sophisticated navigation functions and access

to additional connected services. The specification also embraces a 10-speaker audio system, full leather seat upholstery, electrically adjustable front seats with heaters and adaptive headlights that adjust automatically to improve illumination through bends and turns.

The Excel Touring Sports gains a panoramic roof. And that was lovely for letting plenty of light in and making the cabin appear even more spacious.

This Avenis has advanced well. Prices start at around £18,000.

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Car is good for tax bills!

By Ian Donaldson

BUYING most of BMW's range involved a healthy dose of heart as well as head – they are mostly cars aimed at people who love driving.

Well, here's one that might make you phone your accountant before signing on the dotted line. He might then tell you to choose a different model.

The big X5 is now available with an electric motor to assist the petrol engine and save a bit of fuel in the right circumstances. It will cost. But it might not, and you would then be better off buying the diesel, which costs only £215 more, goes faster and might actually save you money on longer journeys.

But here's where the accountant comes in; because the new X5 puts out such tiny

amounts of tailpipe emissions in the official tests it qualifies for zero road tax and – more important for all the business people who fancy one – there's a £2,711 saving in benefit in kind each year.

Annoyingly, the emissions are a tiny bit too high (by a measly 2g/km) for the car to dodge the London congestion charge and the same minute tailpipe excess means the car does not qualify for a government plug-in car grant, which would lop £5,000 off the price now and £2,500 off from March, when the rules tighten.

This hybrid X5 costs £52,105 for the SE or £56,705 for the M Sport version on test.

Topping a dead battery to full takes less than four hours from a domestic plug, about an hour less if you have a BMW Wallbox installed. The car can then be ordered to mix petrol and current in the most economical way, save all its battery for later or combine the two power sources for maximum urge.

Of which there is plenty. And so back to the heart; where you find a car that looks precisely like the diesel equivalent with some modestly different badging and a flap in a front wing where you plug in the charging lead.

Even lumbered with the extra weight of a bigish battery (which robs the boot of a little room under the floor and means you can't have this X5 with a third row of seats) this is a car that flies when you prod both power sources into action – less than six seconds to 60 is brisk in anyone's book.

Driven like that, you'll exhaust the battery in minutes. With a little restraint you can drive up to 40mph-ish on flat roads on electrical power alone and get somewhere like the 19 miles a full charge can offer.

BMW reckons 80 per cent of journeys with an X5 are less than 19 miles (station



For all the business people who fancy one – there's a £2,711 saving in benefit-in-kind each year

car park and back, anyone?) and used like that your travelling expenses will be negligible.

With commendable honesty, BMW then adds that a 40 mile daily round trip should return up to 47mpg, but stray into longer distance territory (125 miles and up) and economy tumbles to 27mpg.

That's more economical than the petrol X5 with similar performance, says its maker, perhaps missing the point that the 3.0 litre diesel would do better. Which is why buyers go for it, of course. In petrol-focused China and the States the argument

for the X5 hybrid makes more compelling sense.

It remains a decent drive in any case; a car built seemingly from a piece of solid steel, so tough does it feel. It's big, but you soon learn not to fear multi-storey car park ramps and Waitrose parking bays; sitting tall helps here.

Standard spec is generous, with full leather trim, xenon headlights, metallic paint, fine sat nav, big alloys, cruise, powered tailgate and parking sensors front and rear. As ever, there are options galore to tempt you to spend a bit more.



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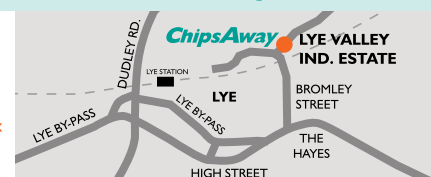
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5 Business & Farming

business opportunities

6 Property

accommodation to let

7 Jobs

employment wanted

8 Motoring

cars over £1500

9 Local Information

public & legal notices

10 Personals

personal

11 Classified Ads

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12 Classified Ads

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cars under £1500

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CITROEN XSARA Picasso, 2005 reg., 1600cc, MoT, nice condition. £995. ono. 0121 557 9144.

FORD MONDEO 2.0 LX 2002 Green, A/C, CD, alloys. Very good condition. MoT June 16. Just serviced, 2 owners. Only 49,000 genuine miles. £1,200. o.n.o. Telephone 07887 593617.

cars under £1500

GRAND VOYAGER, 2002 2.5 Diesel, Manual, good condition for year. 154,000 miles. MoT till June. £1,050 o.n.o. 07976 600110.

HONDA JAZZ 1350, 02 plate, FSH, full new exhaust system, light metallic green, good condition. £1000. 07865 290473.

HONDA JAZZ 1.4DSI Sport, 2002, 73,000 miles, SH, 12 months MoT, silver, great family car, good condition. £1,295ono. 07792 556203.

MAZDA 323i 1997, 7 months MoT, clean car. £375. 01902 674562.

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PEUGEOT 207S 3dr, silver, 06 Reg., 56,000 miles, 10 months MoT, lady owner, lovely condition. £1,500. 07816 094728.

PEUGEOT 406 GTX 2.2 HDi, silver, fully loaded, 2.8 months MoT, 125,898k, blue, good condition. £895 ono. 07885 255221.

RENAULT MEGANE 1.4 52 plate, 109,000 on clock, MoT Nov 2016, part service history £700 ono. 07956 670563.

cars under £1500

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ROVER 620SI R reg, MoT end March, Honda engine, good runner, £275 ono. 07719 923101.

TOYOTA YARIS 1000cc, 5-dr, 95,000 miles, silver, FSH, excellent condition, one owner, £795 ono. 07857 738635.

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public & legal notices

highways england

ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 - SECTION 14(1)(a) THE M5 MOTORWAY (JUNCTION 4, BROMSGROVE) (SLIP ROADS) (TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) ORDER 2016

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that Highways England Company Limited (Company no. 9346363) has made an Order on the M5 Motorway, at Bromsgrove in the County of Worcestershire, to allow street lighting works to be carried out.

The effect of the Order will be to close the slip road leading:-

- to the southbound carriageway of the M5 at Junction 4;
- from the northbound carriageway of the M5 at Junction 4.

The work will be carried out over two nights between 20:30 hours and 05:00 hours and is expected to start on Saturday 6 February 2016. The Order will come into force on 5 February 2016.

Vehicles being used for police, fire brigade or ambulance purposes and vehicles being used in connection with the works or by a traffic officer will be exempt from the closures.

Diversion routes via alternative junctions of the M5 will be signed.

For further information please contact Leonard Murray on 0121 678 8408.

Karen Eustace, an Officer in Highways England Company Limited.

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For convenience you may fax any advertising requirements to Marie Hogg on 01902 713146 or email marie.hogg@expressandstar.co.uk (remember to include a name/contact number for confirmation of receipt)

10 Personals

personal

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general

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ClassifiedAds

Norton take step towards taking title once more

NORTON Social A took another significant step towards retaining the Stourbridge Snooker League Premier Division championship with a 3-2 win on the tables of one of their pursuers, the 2014 champions Hotshots SC A.

Brandhall Labour held on to second place defeating Hotshots' B team 3-2.

Baggeridge Social celebrated their first win, 3-2 at home to Moor Pool & Snooker A. Kingswinford Cons B beat Moor Pool & Snooker B 5-0. Third-placed Kingswinford Cons A fought back from 2-0 down at Norton Social B.

Wombourne lost the first two frames at Stourbridge Inst B but staged a recovery. Moor Pool & Snooker B also went 2-0 down at home to the Institute B team, but fought back to win 3-2.

Kinver A lost 3-2 to Amblecote Institute B. Stourbridge Institute A took all five frames at Kinver C. Stourbridge Old Edwardians stretched their division two lead to eight points, with a 4-1 win at home to Kingswinford Cons D but Amblecote Royal British Legion were surprisingly beaten 3-2 by Stourbridge Institute D.

Stourbridge Inst C edged out Amblecote Inst C, while Kingswinford Snooker Centre recorded a 4-1 at Amblecote Inst D.

Results: Premier Division Baggeridge Social 3 Moor Pool & Snooker A 2; Brandhall Labour 3 Hotshots SC B 2; Hotshots SC A 2 Norton Social A 3

First Division: Norton Social B 3 Kingswinford Cons A 2; Kinver Const A 2 Amblecote Inst B; Kingswinford Cons B 5 Moor Pool & Snooker B 0; Stourbridge Inst B 2 Wombourne 3; Kinver Const C 0 Stourbridge Inst A 5; Moor Pool & Snooker B 3 Stourbridge Inst 2

Second Division: Amblecote Inst D 1 Kingswinford SC 4; Amblecote RBL B 2 Stourbridge Inst D 3; S/D Old Edwardians 4 Kingswinford Cons D 1; Kingswinford Cons C 4 Kinver Const D 1; Stourbridge Inst C 3 Amblecote Inst C 2

Morris keen to ride again for Heathens

CRADLEY fans favourite Ashley Morris is counting down the days to his first meeting back with the club.

Morris, who won every honour possible with the Heathens during his four seasons with them, is set for an emotional return to the green, red and white.

Morris said: "I can't wait to get started back with Cradley. I'm delighted to be back.

"I'm excited for the season to start now and I'm just looking to make the most of it.

"The last season I had with Cradley was great, so if I can get back to that form that will be brilliant."

Only 30 tickets remain for the Heathens Season Launch Night at Cradley Heath Liberal Club on March 21. They cost £5, from the club shop in Cradley Heath Market or at cradleyheathens.co via Paypal.

Lennox ready to make up time



Halesowen boxer Lennox Clarke

HALESOWEN'S Lennox Clarke is eager to make up for lost time when he battles for a belt at Walsall Town Hall this month.

The hard-hitting super middleweight tops the bill when professional boxing returns to the venue on Friday February 19.

Clarke was due to take on Midlands middleweight champion Craig Cunningham last October, but pulled out through injury. Brummie southpaw Cunningham has now moved on with the title. Instead,

Clarke will attempt to seize the British Challenge crown against three-time Southern area title challenger Richard Horton, aged 34.

The 'Undefeated' show is promoted by Black Country Boxing and ring legend Ricky Hatton, who will lead Wednesbury's Sam Evans, Pauly Upton, Reuben Arrowsmith and big heavyweight Nathan Gorman into battle.

A Black Country heavyweight features in West Bromwich's Matt Gordon. Also in action is Manny Zaber,

from Old Hill. Meanwhile, Christian Amendola hit a steep learning curve as his England Youth Championship hopes evaporated.

He was pulled out by the referee before the first round was over of his bout at the Wallace Centre, Stoke-on-Trent.

Amendola, from Priory Park Boxing Club in Dudley, swapped leather at 60kg in the area semi-final against Jamie Edwards, from Triumph in Coventry, but came off second best.

Greg is Lynch-pin to widen golf's appeal

PGA pro Greg Lynch hopes that coaching youngsters across the Black County proves a sure-fire way to make the sport of golf cool.

Lynch, who hails from Birmingham but began his training at Halesowen Golf Club before moving on to coach at Warley Woods, set up his GL Golfing Academy almost seven years ago and has since coached thousands across the region.

Generally one of the sports that struggles with an elitist image, golf has faced an uphill struggle in recent times but things are brightening up according to Lynch.

He said: "A big part of what I'm trying to do is get the sport away from elitism. Golf needs to be more accessible, especially for the youngsters. "What we're doing at Warley Woods at the moment is great. It's a nine hole pay and play.

"There is no dress code. You can show up in your jeans and trainers rather than the old style of colours and trousers, where you needed a membership. It can definitely put youngsters off.

Several

"With Rory McIlroy you have a good young sportsman putting a across a message about accessibility." Lynch, who played several pro am events and turned professional in 2008, soon found himself turning his hand to coaching a year later. "We're coaching around 800 students every year through the academy," he added.

"My vision was to grow the game and its participation levels. Everything spiralled from there, really. I work with around 25-30 schools in the area including 15 in Sandwell. All of the schools have taken really well to it. Brandhall Primary School in Oldbury is one of the schools I've been working with for a while and I try and encourage the kids to get involved at Warley Woods.

"With the primary schools I tend to make it more fun-based activities. They learn the basics – the hold and the stance – and if they enjoy it they come to the club and learn more about techniques. Back when I learned it was very 'old school'. We would line up and it was almost like an army procedure, but research has shown the kids want it more fun and relaxed."

Springfield Primary School, in Rowley Regis, and Ormiston Forge Academy, in Cradley Heath,



Pro golfer Greg Lynch, during a golf workshop at Oakham Primary, Tividale, helping youngsters get into the sport

are two more schools looking to acquire Lynch's unique training services, while Bristnall Hall in Oldbury is another secondary school that proves children in their teenage years are also keen to get involved.

He added: "The Lyng Primary School (West Bromwich) has really tried to push it into its curriculum. It links with maths and helps with things like life skills and honesty. We're really trying to promote things like teamwork, respect and honesty."

Lynch received a huge set of Tri-Golf equipment from the Golf Foundation that helps the coaching function. He also receives financial help from other organisations, such as the Sandwell Play Scheme on behalf of Sandwell Council .

Any schools, colleges or those of any age looking to get in the swing of things can contact Lynch on enquiries@glgolfacademy.com or visit <http://glgolfacademy.com/> – for several different tuition courses.

Teams are facing up to relegation possibility

STOURBRIDGE Chess Club's second team faced a strong Rushall team away in the Wolverhampton league on Monday, but lost 4-2, with Eric Horwill and Julie Wilson both winning their games.

On Wednesday, the first team faced top of the table South Birmingham 'A' and were heavily outgraded on every board except board 1 where grandmaster Keith Arkell was playing for Stourbridge.

Due to illness, Stourbridge were also forced to field two reserves. First to finish was reserve Dave Scriven. His opponent capitalised on a mistake made in the opening and quickly won. On board six, Julie Wilson also misplayed the opening but managed to claw her way back and force a draw. This was followed by Stourbridge losses on boards 3 and 4, leaving the Arkell brothers still fighting. End-game specialist Keith successfully won a pawn in a bishop and pawn endgame and brought home the win while brother Nick lost from a wild position in a time scramble. This made the final score 1½-4½. Stourbridge remain bottom of division 1 with only four matches remaining and need to start winning matches to avoid relegation.

The Birmingham league division 4 team are in even greater danger of relegation and travelled to Solihull 'A' on Wednesday, losing 4½-1½. The team is now three points adrift of safety with three matches remaining, including games against the other two relegation contenders.

For more information, call Dave Scriven on 01384 423642or visit www.stourbridgechess.f9.co.uk

Hosts extend unbeaten run to 15 games

Hereford Lads 2 Team Dudley 1 HEREFORD Lads Club extended their league unbeaten run to 15 matches with a 2-1 win over Team Dudley at the County Ground.

The promotion hopefuls took the lead with seven minutes gone, as Matt Evans rose, unmarked and highest from six yards out to meet a corner and give TD the start they dreaded.

A very difficult start for the students didn't get much better. TD couldn't muster much up on either front, although Alex Pinches did put the ball in the net but was flagged, correctly, offside.

Team Dudley did get better as the half went on, but it took until an hour in to level, as Nathan Jones blasted home.

But with 15 minutes remaining, Evans headed home the winner.

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DK runners face sticky conditions

IT was another Saturday and another muddy field to run round for Dudley Kingswinford Running Club.

Rather than the bread and butter of the Birmingham League this was like a cup game as the muddy field was in Loughborough and the event was the Midlands Cross Country Championships, attracting clubs from all four points of the compass, making it a particularly competitive event.

Originally due to be held at Stafford Common, waterlogging at the original venue meant a change of plan with Prestwold Hall in Leicestershire stepping in at almost the eleventh hour. The additional travelling distance put a number of runners off but DK were still able to field a strong team to race round the three lap, 12 kilometre course.

Despite a very gluey surface churned up by previous age group races, Ben Foster was first home for the blue hoops in 55th place in 43.07, Rob Meredith was not too far behind in 62nd in 43.20. However Matt Biggs was forced to pull out after two laps, the sticky conditions and uncertain surface aggravating a hamstring problem.

This left Dave Norman to take third place for the club in 161st in 49.10, Daren Thompson finishing fourth counter in 166th in 49.35, Simon Blizzard was 178th in 49.54 and Darran Bishop was sixth counter for the club finishing in 199th in 50.59.

Knocking on the door of the A team, Mark Homer came home in 216th in 52.07, Kieran Pitt was 250th in 54.18, Paul Silk was 268th in 55.30 and Graham Wildgoose was 272nd in 55.52.

With Notts AC, Tipton Harriers and Owls AC taking the medals DK came home a very respectable 13th of 32 clubs, ahead of Wolverhampton & Bilston, Birchfield Harriers and Halesowen AC.

Heavyweight champ Fury tops the bill at sporting dinner

CONTROVERSIAL world heavyweight champion Tyson Fury will be the feature attraction of a sportsman's dinner in Birmingham next month.

The reigning IBO, WBO and WBA 'super' titlist will take centre stage at the newly-opened Vox Centre - part of Resorts World in the National Exhibition Centre - on Friday February 19.

The 27-year-old Mancunian will be interviewed on the night by Telford's Richie Woodhall, the former WBC super middleweight champion and boxing pundit.

Standard tickets have all sold out but gold and platinum passes are still available, either per person or at a reduced rate for tables of 10.

Gold, costing £75, includes seating in the middle of the hall, a three-course meal and a photo opportunity, for an extra £20, with Fury.

VIP, at £150, includes 'premier' seating, the meal and the picture included in the price. Sponsorship packages are also available. Call promoter Ken Purchase on 07976 842 383 or to buy online, visit www.boxfroguk.com

Glassboys back in reach of play-offs

Stourbridge 2 Marine 0

THE Glassboys moved to within a point of the play-offs with a goal in each half on Monday night.

The visitors played their part in the game and it was the Merseysiders who made the running early on.

Stourbridge grabbed the opener on 19 minutes when Leon Broadhurst broke into the box and squared it for Karl Hawley to easily score his 22nd goal of the season.

On 52 minutes though it was 2-0 when Justin Richards laid the ball off for Chris Lait who stepped into the box and side footed the ball into

Stourbridge FC

the net. The result lifted the Glassboys to sixth in the table, one place outside the play-off places with three games in hand.

Stourbridge 5 Hyde United 1

ASSISTANT manager Jon Ford has demanded "more of the same" from his Stourbridge side after last Saturday's emphatic demolition job over the Tigers.

Goals from Karl Hawley, Matt Dodd and Chris Lait ended the contest by half-time before second half goals from Justin Richards and Ashley

Vincent rounded off an impressive victory for the Glassboys.

"It was the perfect day apart from conceding right at the end," Ford said.

Barwell 3 Stourbridge 1

DAYS earlier, Stourbridge saw their play-off hopes hit as they well beaten at bogey side Barwell - despite taking the lead on 32 minutes through Karl Hawley.

The Leicestershire side levelled two minutes from half-time via a wind assisted Alex Tompkins effort.

Sub Luke Barlone fired Barwell in front on 52 minutes. Brady Hickey finished off the scoring.

STOUR HIT BY A HOME LOSS

Stourbridge 3 Leicester Lions 10

STOUR'S National 2 North campaign suffered a major blow with this home loss.

Despite dominating first half possession and territory, Stour were guilty of trying to force matters, their endeavour undone by handling errors and a well organised Lions' defence that repelled everything thrown at it.

On an afternoon to forget, Stour salvaged a losing bonus point thanks only to the wayward boot of the visitors' outside half Jon Williams who missed four kicks at goal.

Stour were straight out of the blocks, and when Lions conceded a penalty deep in their 22 referee Neil Chivers initially awarded a try when Rod Petty sneaked over from a quick tap.

But following assistant referee Mark Liddell's intervention he ruled that the penalty had been taken from the wrong spot.

Stour had a let-off when Lions winger Sam Benjamin scorched round the cover to draw the last defender but with the line at his mercy centre Luke Veebel fumbled the scoring pass and the scoreboard remained untroubled at the break.

That was to change very quickly when the teams took the field for the second half. Stour aimlessly kicked away possession near halfway to set up a Lions' attack, Williams ghosted through a gap in the defensive line and linked with his wide runners, Benjamin crossing for a try in front of the scoreboard barely a minute in.

Gaining in confidence the visitors started to move the ball, the elusive Benjamin a constant threat out wide. A fluffed clearance kick gifted the visitors another opportunity to run at the Stour defences, both sides coughing up the ball cheaply before replacement backrow Will Roach reacted quickest, burst through a gap in the misaligned Stour fringe defences and galloped 35m to score.

Stour frustration resulted in a reversed penalty directly in front of their posts but again Williams failed to convert. Stour opted for points when awarded a penalty at the other end and fullback Tom Mitchell's kick brought them back within a score.

On Sunday, Stour travel to Coventry to take on Broadstreet.

Groundhog Day feeling for DK



Ollie Shakespeare seen for DK with the ball against Bridgnorth in a closely fought contest

DK 16 Bridgnorth 23

DK were left with a Groundhog Day-type of feeling, thanks to another narrow defeat with a late try against top opposition.

The opening exchanges belonged to Bridgnorth, DK had kicked off poorly with the wind, and handed the early initiative to Bridgnorth which they had soon turned into points with an early try.

In the 17th minute Bridgnorth were penalised by the referee for crossing, up stepped Duncan Tompkins and DK were on the scoreboard.

The pressure built up and a quick penalty by

Connah Jones was rewarded with another penalty, this time Tompkins put DK in the lead.

With a 6-5 advantage at the break, DK had lost the benefit of the wind and Bridgnorth inside centre Will Crossley powered over to make in 6-10. That was soon 6-15 when Bridgnorth took full advantage of a loose ball

DK came back into the game and a penalty try was converted by Tompkins, who then kicked a penalty to put DK in front with 10 minutes to go - then Groundhog Day struck again.

Number 10 Matt Farrington cut through the defence to score for Bridgnorth, 20-16 and the scoring was finished by a Bridgnorth penalty.

Huge total too much for Cookley

Swindon (96-2) lost to Enville 'A' (97-1) ENVILLE 'A' elected to bowl, and a fine opening spell by Tom Bingham (0-12) and George Roberts contained the Swindon openers, for whom Dave Silcox scored 25 no, to 17 from four overs.

Paul Clarke seemed to ease the stranglehold and Swindon began to score more freely. Luke McDonald was run out for 17, Lee Passmore set about the Enville attack, reached 25 quickly and retired, but the other Swindon batsmen couldn't repair the slow start and the innings finishing at 96.

Enville 'A' got off to a bad start losing Rhodri Parfitt in the first over, but Spencer Mann (27 no) joined Matt Branch (26 no). Once the opening salvo from Passmore had been repelled, the Swindon change bowlers could not contain Enville, who reached their target in comfort in the 10th over.

Pedmore (160-3) beat Cookley (64-2) by 96 runs

DAN Jones (12), opening with Dave Skelding for Pedmore, started in fine style hitting Steve Anderson for three fours before being bowled by Todd Henderson.

Matt Porter (39 no) made batting look easy and Cookley found the ensuing onslaught difficult to contain. The only batsman to fail for Pedmore was John Herdman who having hit one glorious back wall boundary was bowled by Matt Wood. Paul Taylor (27 no) and Dan Such (20) continued scoring rapidly, finishing on 160.

Cookley, facing a mammoth total, started cautiously with Henderson making a guest appearance.

The big total made the task almost impossible and perhaps a win was out of reach, but Cookley were aided by some wayward bowling, wides being second top scorer.

Yeltz suffer third defeat on the trot

Whitby Town 2 Halesowen Town 1 HALESOWEN suffered their third league defeat in a row, with all three goals in the game coming in eight second-half minutes.

Mike Roberts missed an open goal at the start of the second half but made no mistake moments later.

Kaiman Anderson equalised for Halesowen on 57 minutes when his shot was blocked by the legs of goalkeeper Shane Bland, but the ball looped into the goal.

Roberts saw a mis-hit shot squeeze past Rowley for the winner.

Halesowen are in 14th place ahead of Saturday's visit of Salford City.

★★★

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